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PATRONAGE PRIEST AND PARISH IN THE ARCHDEACONRY  
OF HUNTINGDON 1109-1547

Colin Alexander Weale

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy awarded by Middlesex University  
in partial fulfilment of its requirements,  
March, 1996

The research was undertaken at Oak Hill College.

Abstract of Patronage, Priest and Parish in the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon 1109 - 1547 by C.A. Weale, submitted for the degree of Ph.D. of Middlesex University

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The aim of the thesis is to trace the development of the parochial ministry in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon from 1109 to 1547 and to examine the effects on this ministry of patronage exercised by the crown, the laity, the monasteries, the clergy, the colleges and the pope.

The Introduction describes the area of ministry, namely the archdeaconry and the different types of parish within it. This is followed by a discussion of the source materials used in this study. The thesis is divided into three main sections under the headings, 'Patronage and Patrons', 'The Clergy' and 'The Church and The Laity'

The section on 'Patronage and Patrons' examines the use and abuse of the patronage system. The appropriation of churches by the monastic houses and its effect on the parishes is examined in detail. Disputes which affected all forms of patronage are also considered.

The section on 'The Clergy' deals with their life and work in the archdeaconry. The attempts made by the bishops to provide an educated clergy is examined in detail. The problems connected with absenteeism and pluralism and the effects on ministry are considered.

The section on 'The Church and The Laity' relies very much on mid-fifteenth-century documents as little material is available for the earlier period. The section shows how much the laity were involved in the life of the Church, especially in their membership of fraternities and guilds. Wills which provide details of life during this later period are examined.

A special section on the controversial subject of the response of both the clergy and the laity to the sixteenth-century reforms follows. In the final chapter observations are made on the whole period and some conclusions are drawn on the work of the Church throughout four and a half centuries.



## Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgements .. .. .	iv
List of Abbreviations .. .. .	v
Bibliography .. .. .	vii
Introduction and Sources .. .. .	xviii
<b>1. Patronage and Patrons .. .. .</b>	<b>2</b>
Crown Patronage .. .. .	3
Queen as Patron .. .. .	20
Lay Patronage .. .. .	22
Bishop's Patronage .. .. .	26
Clerical Corporations .. .. .	33
Prebendaries as Patrons .. .. .	38
Colleges as Patrons .. .. .	41
Miscellaneous Patrons .. .. .	44
The Religious Orders as Patrons .. .. .	47
Appropriations and Vicarages .. .. .	49
Monasteries and Their Churches .. .. .	65
Papal Patronage .. .. .	84
Patronage and Conflict .. .. .	91
The Effects of Patronage .. .. .	97
Notes to pages 2 - 100 .. .. .	101
<b>2 The Clergy .. .. .</b>	<b>124</b>
Clergy on Leave .. .. .	129
The Clergy and Education .. .. .	132
The Cure of Souls .. .. .	140
The Faithfulness of the Clergy .. .. .	146
The Clergy and Exchanges .. .. .	153
The Cost of Living .. .. .	161
Monastic Pensions .. .. .	169

	<u>Page</u>
Provision for Old Age .. .. .	170
Absenteeism .. .. .	175
Pluralism .. .. .	183
Celibacy .. .. .	188
Assistant Clergy .. .. .	193
Chantries and Cantarists .. .. .	201
Guild Chaplains and Fraternities .. .. .	211
Obits and Lights .. .. .	219
Clerical Wills .. .. .	223
Notes to pages 124-237 .. .. .	238
 <b>3. The Church and The Laity .. .. .</b>	 <b>260</b>
Lay Fraternities and Guilds .. .. .	275
Belief and Practice .. .. .	277
Heresy .. .. .	280
Churchwardens and Lay Representatives .. .. .	283
Notes to pages 260 - 293 .. .. .	294
 <b>4. Sixteenth Century Reforms .. .. .</b>	 <b>302</b>
Notes to pages 302-317 .. .. .	318
 <b>5. Observations and Conclusions .. .. .</b>	 <b>322</b>
Notes to pages 322-326 .. .. .	327
 <b>Appendices:</b>	
I.Monastic Houses and Their Churches .. .. .	328
II.Lay Patrons and their Churches .. .. .	330
III.Tables of Assessments made on Clerical Income..	336
IV.Fraternities and Guilds .. .. .	347
V.Transcript of rents from obit lands .. .. .	349
VI.Examples of sixteenth-century wills .. .. .	353

VII.	Details of the orders of those presented to livings between 1419 and 1547 .. .. .	360
VIII.	Pluralists in the archdeaconry from the 1366 returns. . . . .	361

#### MAPS

1.	Map of the medieval diocese of Lincoln .. . . .	364
2.	Map of Huntingdonshire parishes .. . . .	365
3.	Map of Hertfordshire showing the four deaneries within the archdeaconry of Huntingdon .. . . .	366

#### ILLUSTRATION

Scratch dial in the porch of St. Leonard's Church, Bengoe	367
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## Abbreviations

(Full details of works cited are given in the Bibliography)

A. and C.	Abbot and Convent.
<u>A.A.S.R.P.</u>	<u>Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers.</u>
<u>Abbrev.Placit.</u>	<u>Placitorum in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi asservatorium Abbreviatio.</u>
add.	additional.
Beds.H.S.	Bedfordshire Historical Society.
B.I.H.R.	Borthwick Institute of Historical Research.
B.J.R.L.	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.
B.L.	British Library, London.
B.M.	British Museum.
<u>B.R.U.C.</u>	<u>Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge.</u>
<u>B.R.U.O.</u>	<u>Biographical Register of the University of Oxford.</u>
<u>C.Ch.R.</u>	<u>Calendar of the Charter Rolls.</u>
<u>C.C.R.</u>	<u>Calendar of the Close Rolls.</u>
<u>C.P.L.</u>	<u>Calendar of Papal Letters.</u>
<u>C.P.P.</u>	<u>Calendar of Petitions to the Pope.</u>
<u>C.P.R.</u>	<u>Calendar of the Patent Rolls.</u>
cart	cartularium,
carta	Charter.
<u>Carta Missenden</u>	<u>The Cartulary of Missenden Abbey.</u>
<u>Cart Mon.de Rameseia</u>	<u>Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia.</u>
<u>Chapter Acts</u>	<u>Chapter Acts of the Cathedral Church of St. Mary of Lincoln.</u>
<u>Chron. Rames.</u>	<u>Chronicon Abbatiae Rameseiansis.</u>
<u>Councils and Synods</u>	<u>Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church.</u>
<u>C.R.R.</u>	<u>Curia Regis Rolls</u>
<u>C.U.L.</u>	Cambridge University Library.
<u>D.B.</u>	<u>Domesday Book.</u>
<u>E.E.A.</u>	<u>English Episcopal Acta.</u>
<u>E.E.T.S.</u>	<u>Early English Text Society.</u>
<u>E.H.R.</u>	<u>English Historical Review.</u>
ed.	editor, edited.
edn.	edition.
Episc. Reg.	Episcopal Register.
F. of F.	Feet of Fines.
<u>Fac. Off. Regs.</u>	<u>Faculty Office Registers.</u>
<u>Fasti.</u>	<u>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae.</u>
<u>Foedera.</u>	<u>Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et cojuscunque generis acta publica inter reges Angliae et alios imperatores...</u>
<u>Gravesend</u>	<u>Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend.</u>
<u>Grosseteste Epistolae</u>	<u>Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae.</u>
<u>Grosseteste</u>	<u>Rotuli Roberti Grosseteste.</u>

Herts.	Hertfordshire.
Hunts.	Huntingdonshire.
Hunt. Wills.	Court of the archdeaconry of Huntingdon, Wills.
<u>H. de W.</u>	<u>Rotuli Hugonis de Welles.</u>
<u>H.M.C.R.</u>	<u>Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports.</u>
<u>J.E.H.</u>	<u>Journal of Ecclesiastical History.</u>
<u>Knighton.</u>	<u>Chronicon Henrici Knighton.</u>
<u>Chronicon.</u>	
L.A.O.	Lincoln Archives Office.
L.P.L.	Lambeth Palace Library.
L.R.S.	Lincoln Record Society.
<u>Liber Antiquus.</u>	<u>Liber Antiquus de Ordinationibus Vicariarum Tempore Hugonis Welles Lincolniensis Episcopi.</u>
M.	Magister, master.
mon.	Monastery.
<u>Monasticon</u>	<u>William Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum.</u>
<u>Mon. Rit.</u>	<u>Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicane.</u>
n.	note.
n.s.	New series.
O.H.S.	Oxford Historical Society.
orig.	original.
O.U.C.A.	Oxford University Committee for Archaeology.
P. and C.	Prior and Convent.
pb.	paperback
P.R.O.	Public Record Office, London.
preb.	prebend, prebendary.
<u>R.A.L.</u>	<u>Lincoln Registrum Antiquissimum</u>
<u>Rec. Comm.</u>	<u>Record Commission.</u>
reg.	register.
<u>Repingdon.</u>	<u>The Register of Bishop Repingdon.</u>
R.O.	Record Office.
<u>Rot. Hund</u>	<u>Rotuli Hundredorum.</u>
<u>Rot.Lit.Pat</u>	<u>Rotuli Litterarum Patentium.</u>
<u>R.S.</u>	<u>Rolls Series.</u>
<u>S.C.H.</u>	<u>Studies in Church History.</u>
ser.	Series.
Soc.	Society.
<u>Stat. Realm</u>	<u>Statutes of the Realm.</u>
<u>Subsidy.</u>	<u>Subsidy Collected In The Diocese of Lincoln in 1526.</u>
<u>Sutton.</u>	<u>The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton.</u>
<u>T.R.H.S.</u>	<u>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.</u>
<u>Valor Eccles.</u>	<u>Valor Ecclesiasticus.</u>
<u>Valuation Nor.</u>	<u>Valuation of Norwich.</u>
<u>V.C.H.</u>	<u>Victoria County History.</u>
<u>Visitations.</u>	<u>Visitation In The Diocese of Lincoln 1517 - 31.</u>
W.A.M.	Westminster Abbey Muniments.
<u>Wilkins, Concilia.</u>	<u>Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae. ed. D. Wilkins.</u>
W.P.C.	Wrest Park Cartulary.

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46362                      Royston Priory cartulary.

##### Cotton Manuscripts:

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Faustina A iv                St. Neot's cartulary.

Faustina C i                Huntingdon cartulary.

Tiberius C ix                Waltham cartulary.

Tiberius E v                St. James, Northampton cartulary.

Vespasian E xix            Nostell cartulary.

Vespasian E xxv            Reading cartulary.

Vitellius E xv                Osney Cartulary.

##### Egerton Manuscripts

3031                        Reading cartulary.

3033                        Canons Ashby cartulary.

##### Harley Manuscripts

1708                        Reading cartulary.

3688                        Missenden cartulary.

3739                        Waltham cartulary.

## **Cambridge University Library**

### Additional Manuscripts

- |      |                    |
|------|--------------------|
| 3020 | Thorney cartulary. |
| 3021 | Thorney cartulary. |

## **Hertford, Hertfordshire Record Office**

- |           |                                   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 17465     | Flamstead cartulary.              |
| D/P12.5/1 | Baldock churchwardens' accounts.  |
| 57489     | Wymondley manor court rolls 1351. |
| 57566     | Wymondley court rolls 1369.       |

## **Huntingdon, County Record Office**

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- |         |  |
|---------|--|
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| 2449/25 | Ramsey, 1547 - 1550.                     |

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- XVIII William Alnwick (1437 - 1449)  
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 fos. 164r - 170v institutions, Huntingdon archdeaconry
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XX John Chedworth (1452 - 1471)  
fos. 1r - 112r memoranda  
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fos. 134r - 171v ordinations  
fos. 173r - 197v memoranda

XXII John Russell (1480 - 1494)  
fos. 1r - 118v ordinations  
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fos. 102r - 110v memoranda

XXVI John Longland (1521 - 1547)  
fos. 1r - 46v ordinations  
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**Spalding** Spalding Gentlemen's Society Crowland Cartulary.

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## INTRODUCTION

This is a study in the use and sometimes abuse of patronage, the work and ministry of the clergy and the response of the laity to that ministry. It is a sample study of a single, small archdeaconry over a period of four and a half centuries. While many studies have been made of pre-Reformation clergy this is an attempt to trace the attitude of the people from the twelfth century to the Reformation. How far were the clergy alienated from their people and was there anti-clericalism? These controversial topics will be considered.

The small and fairly rural archdeaconry of Huntingdon in the vast diocese of Lincoln is the area under consideration. In the year 1100 the diocese included in its boundaries the following counties: Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Cambridgeshire and part of Hertfordshire. In 1109, Cambridgeshire was detached from the diocese to form the new bishopric of Ely. The abbey of Ely had for some time claimed to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishops of Lincoln. Abbot Richard (c.1102) tried to turn it into a bishopric but without success. After his death, Henry I pushed the scheme through and so the diocese was formed and the abbey church at Ely became the new cathedral, with Henry's clerk, Hervey as the first bishop.<sup>(1)</sup> Thus the depleted archdeaconry of Huntingdon, which originally included Cambridgeshire, now consisted only of Huntingdonshire and parts of Hertfordshire. The links which Cambridgeshire had with the diocese of Lincoln were thus severed. However, the new bishop of Ely retained the patronage of the

churches which had been in the gift of the abbot, namely, Bluntisham, Hatfield, Kelshall and Somersham.

In 1163 the great Benedictine abbey of St. Albans gained exemption from the bishops of Lincoln when Robert II, bishop of Lincoln (1148-66), renounced his jurisdiction over the abbey and the fifteen churches which they had in their territory. The abbey was to remain free as the king's demesne church forever. (2) The old deanery of Braughing in Hertfordshire remained in the diocese of Lincoln. The archdeaconry was one of eight in the diocese, the others were Lincoln, Stow, Leicester, Oxford, Buckingham, Northampton and Bedford. According to the Taxatio of 1291 there were 154 churches in the archdeaconry, (3) but by 1526 there were 164. (4) These churches were grouped into nine deaneries. Five deaneries were in Huntingdonshire: Huntingdon, St. Ives, St. Neots, Leightonstone and Yaxley. The remaining four deaneries were in Hertfordshire, namely, Baldock, Berkhamstead, Hertford and Hitchin.

The Domesday survey of 1086 reveals that Hertfordshire had five boroughs, Ashwell, Berkhamstead, Hertford, St. Albans and Stanstead. Huntingdonshire is recorded as having only one, Huntingdon. (5) Other towns grew in importance in the centuries following Domesday, for instance. Baldock is referred to as a borough in the earl of Pembroke's confirmation of an ancestor's grant of land c.1205-1215. (6) While Buntingford gained in importance from 1288. (7) Its market and fair was confirmed as late as 1378 by Richard II. (8) In 1189 the priory of Austin canons, founded at Crux Roys, created the town of Royston in Hertfordshire. The prior obtained the right to hold a market and a fair in 1189, a second fair was granted in 1213 and a third in 1243, although the town was never given the privilege of a

borough. (9)

' Huntingdonshire, for a small county with a good deal of undrained fenland, had a very creditable record of urbanisation', writes Maurice Beresford. (10) Holme was founded in 1167 and is described as a petty borough. (11) Beresford points out the importance of religious communities in the founding of new towns. St.Ives was founded by the abbots of Ramsey who had acquired the riverside manor of Slepe late in the eleventh century. The bones of St.Ivo had been brought there earlier in the century but the commercial life of the town dates from 1110 when a fair was granted for Easter week. (12) The priory of St.Neots which was re-founded at the shrine of St. Neot in 1078 was sponsor for the new commercial centre there. A fair was granted there between 1107 and 1122. (13) The influence of the religious communities on the life and work of the church was considerable and certainly not confined to the cloister.

Priorities and abbeys made considerable use of patronage in the archdeaconry in appointing men to valuable livings in their gift. Lay landowners, clerical corporations, colleges and the Crown all exercised their influence as patrons of churches on their estates. From time to time disputes over patronage occupied the courts, as will be shown. Fortunately, the paramount influence of the monasteries, when vicarages were founded in the churches they had appropriated, was somewhat curbed.

In examining the life and work of the clergy, the general term 'priest' has been used. Many clergy who worked in the parishes were not priests but deacons, subdeacons and even in minor orders, mere acolytes. The efforts of the bishops

of Lincoln to produce a better educated clergy are clearly evident throughout the four and a half centuries. Boniface VIII's constitution Cum ex eo provided a new incentive to ordinands to improve themselves and this and its effects on the clergy are examined in detail. Some of the clergy found the vow of celibacy a burden hard to bear, while others gave way to sins of greed, evidenced in the lives of pluralists. There were those who left their parishes in the care of ill-trained and ill-equipped men. The parishes suffered more from inadequate men than from men who were evil, as will be shown.

The majority of the clergy were local men, probably well-known to their parishioners since childhood. Sometimes relations were strained when tithes were claimed during a bad year; although the evidence is that on the whole in this archdeaconry both clergy and laity worked in harmony. Anti-clericalism, frequently mentioned in some histories, does not appear to have affected this part of the diocese of Lincoln to any great degree. There were isolated incidents, of course, but no wholesale rebellion or disaffection.

Recent studies in the state of the Church during the Henrician reformation have shown that the people of the diocese of Lincoln under Bishop John Longland, a conservative bishop, held firmly to the old Faith, (14) Certainly this is true of the Huntingdon archdeaconry. Changes came with Edward VI and with them a marked withdrawal of financial support, as many of the sixteenth century wills show. All these aspects of the life of the Church in this small archdeaconry are considered.

The survey of the archdeaconry is divided into three main sections under the titles of Patronage and Patrons; The Clergy; The Church and the Laity. This is

followed by a chapter on the effects of the sixteenth century reformation and a chapter on conclusions.

Under the heading Patronage and Patrons all aspects of patronage are considered. The early proprietary system is examined and the changes which were brought about in the twelfth century. Patrons are studied in the following order: the Crown, the laity, the bishops, clerical corporations, prebendaries as patrons, colleges as patrons, religious orders as patrons and papal patronage. The problems connected with provisions are examined as are those resulting from appropriations of benefices by monastic houses. The ordination of second benefices in the form of vicarages is discussed in detail. The burdens to be borne by incumbents are examined. Many gifts of churches to the monastic orders were challenged and disputes took place both inside and outside the curia regis. Disputes concerning tithes affected some parishes and these are also examined.

The chapter on the Clergy begins by defining the various terms found in the episcopal registers. The employment of the clergy in other than parochial cures is examined and the absenteeism that resulted from it. The education of the clergy and the attempts of the bishops, especially those of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to improve it, is examined in detail. The life and work of the clergy in the archdeaconry is studied under the term 'Cure of Souls'. While it is known what was expected of the clergy, it has been difficult to find out how far they carried out these duties.

Some evidence is available for the behaviour of the clergy in crisis, especially during the Black Death of the fourteenth century. Comparatively few clergy left

their parishes to seek cures elsewhere. Pluralists frequently left their cures in the hands of ill-paid and ill-equipped curates. Some of these assistants found work as chaplains and chantry priests, especially from the fourteenth century onwards. Occasionally, the names of these assistant clergy (usually anonymous) are revealed in poll tax returns and visitation records.

Under the title The Church and the Laity the following topics are considered: the laity's use of the sacraments of the Church, the provision for the future life, seen in the many requests for requiems, obits and other forms of commemoration. The wills of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries reveal both their hopes and their fears. The value of fraternities and guilds, often mentioned in these wills, is examined. Whereas some found solace in odd beliefs, heresy and Lollardy, others stayed firmly orthodox. Lay responsibility is seen in the work of the churchwardens, evidenced in church accounts and visitation returns.

In the chapter entitled Sixteenth Century Reforms the controversial topic of the state of the Church prior to the Reformation is examined. This matter has been the subject of a great deal of debate among historians in the past decade. (15) It is hoped that this study over a period of four and a half centuries, albeit in a small area, will help in providing new evidence to assess the state of the Church in the pre-Reformation period and the impact of the Reformation.

## **SOURCES**

In this study, covering four and a half centuries, a wide variety of sources has been used. Much of the manuscript material is held at the Lincoln Archives Office. Unfortunately, detailed records for the twelfth century are scant but all the episcopal

records from 1209 (Hugh of Wells, 1200-35) are available. In addition the Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln (16) and the English Episcopal Acta for the diocese of Lincoln (17) provide useful information on the twelfth and subsequent centuries.

The registers for all the bishops of Lincoln in the thirteenth century have been printed by the Canterbury and York Society and the Lincoln Record Society. These are largely institution records with items of memoranda interspersed, except for Oliver Sutton's records which have been dealt with in great detail by Professor R.M.T. Hill. (18)

In addition to the printed registers for the thirteenth century there are two very valuable records. The first is Bishop Hugh of Wells' Liber Antiquus de Ordinationibus Vicariorum, providing details of more than 300 vicarages established or re-established during his episcopate. (19) The second is Robert Grosseteste's Epistolae, written throughout his episcopate from 1235 to 1253. (20) They provide a remarkable insight into his attitude to a number of issues which bedevilled the Church, not least, the twin evils of pluralism and absenteeism.

The manuscript registers for the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries vary in their usefulness. John Dalderby's register (1300 - 1320), apart from the routine business of the diocese, provides details of those who were given dispensation for study under the terms of the constitution Cum ex eo of Boniface VIII. (21) Unfortunately, not many of the clergy of the Huntingdon archdeaconry availed themselves of this facility.



One of the features of both fourteenth and fifteenth century episcopal registers is the exchange of benefices. Burghersh's register of 1320 - 40 and Bek's (1342 - 47) reveal an increase in this practice. It reached its peak during John Buckingham's episcopate (1363 - 98) with voluminous records. John Gynwell's registers (1347 - 1362) provide a valuable record of the effects of the Black Death. Some of Gynwell's records proved to be very difficult to read, as registers VIII and IX had been very tightly bound, so making it extremely difficult to photocopy.

Work on the fifteenth century bishops' registers has been carried out and is being carried out by several scholars. Mrs Archer has provided a valuable transcription of the Memoranda of Philip Repingdon (1405 - 19). (22) The institution register remains in manuscript form. Dr. Nicholas Bennett is editing Richard Fleming's register (1420 - 24) and one volume is already in print.(23) Although work on the Huntingdon archdeaconry had yet to be published, correspondence with him proved most helpful.

William Alnwick's register (1437 - 49) is written in a very clear hand. His Court Book, printed in A.H.Thompson's The English Clergy and their Organisation in the Later Middle Ages, proved to be of great value in revealing the state of the church in the mid-fifteenth century. (24) Marmaduke Lumley was bishop of Lincoln for one year (1450) so his register is not noteworthy.

John Chedworth's Memoranda (1452 - 72) provided valuable information on the attitude of the Church towards Lollardy and Lollards in the archdeaconry. Nothing of great value for Huntingdon was revealed in Rotherham's register of 1472 - 80, apart from the institution records. Lincoln diocese was just a stepping stone for this theologian, who was translated to York in 1480. The registers of John Russell (1480 -

1494) and William Smith (1495 - 1541) were largely valuable for their institution records. William Smith, who was also president of the council of the Marches of Wales, still made time to visit his diocese and to hold eleven ordinations during his episcopate of nineteen years. (25)

William Atwater proved to be a conscientious bishop as his register and visitation records and his Court Book from 1517 - 1520 show. (26) There are numerous references both to the clergy and parishes in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.

John Longland's registers from 1521 - 1547 have been supplemented by most valuable visitation records, both in print and in manuscript form. (27) These give an account of the state of some parishes and clergy in the archdeaconry and in the diocese as a whole.

In addition to the diocesan records there are the monastic records, especially the cartularies of those religious houses who held appropriated churches and advowsons in the archdeaconry. The patrons holding most churches and advowsons are the abbot and convent of Ramsey, whose records have been printed in the Rolls series. (28) The record of Bermondsey abbey are also found in the same series. (29) Among those cartularies which are in print are those of the abbeys of Colchester St. John, Merton, Missenden, Reading and Waltham. The cartulary of St. Paul's cathedral, London and visitation records of churches held by the dean and chapter proved to be most informative. These cartularies together with the cartularies in manuscript form are listed in the bibliography.

While the above records tell us much about individual churches and the clergy, they give little or no information about the laity. Fortunately, the laity exhibit

something of their own beliefs and their generosity in the vast number of wills made during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They provide evidence of great generosity and love for their local churches. Some wills provide valuable evidence of the existence of fraternities and guilds. Wills lodged both in the Hertford Record Office and the Huntingdon Record Office have been consulted. The clerical wills in particular reveal a real concern for the poor, the ordinary parishioner and a care for those dependent upon them. Some had little to give but, nevertheless, endeavoured to make sure that their bequests were put to good use.

All the above records have been supplemented by both state and papal records. Wherever possible local original sources, for instance, churchwardens' accounts, have been consulted. Unfortunately, very few churchwardens' accounts in the Huntingdon archdeaconry exist before 1547.

## Notes to The Introduction

- 1     Liber Eliensis, ed. E.O.Blake (Camden 3rd, series xcii, 1962), 225-6, 237.
- 2     Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln ed, C.W. Foster, K. Major )10 vols., L.R.S., 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, 41, 46, 51, 62, 67, 1931 - 73), 1. 64 - 66.
- 3     Taxatio Ecclesiastics Angliae et Walliae auctoritate P. Nicolai IV circa A.D. 1291 (Record Commission, 1802), 35 - 37.
- 4     A Subsidy Collected in the Diocese of Lincoln in 1526 , ed. H.Salter (O.H.S., 63, 1913), 171 - 191.
- 5     Domesday Book, Hertfordshire, ed. J.Morris (Chichester, 1976), Book 11: 9: 10: 10, 5: 25, 2, Domesday Book, Huntingdonshire , ed. J. Morris (Chichester, 1975), B1. .
- 6     Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. W. Dugdale, new enlarged edition by J. Caley et al, (6 vols. London, 1817 - 1830), VI. 820.
- 7     V.C.H. Herts. III. 78.
- 8     E. Ekwall, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Place Names (4th. edn., Oxford, 1960), 395., Maurice Beresford, New Towns of the Middle Ages (Gloucester, 1988), 454.
- 9     M. Beresford, New Towns, 454
- 10    Ibid, 55.
- 11    Ibid.
- 12    Ibid. 456.
- 13    Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, ed. C. Johnson and H.A. Cronne (4 vols, Oxford, 1913 - 1968), II. no. 1966.
- 14    M. Bowker, The Henrician Reformation: The Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland 1521 - 1547 (Cambridge, 1981), 181,; C.Haigh, English Reformations (Oxford, 1993), 167.
- 15    Revisionist historians see the Church prior to the Reformation as being in good heart, although not perfect and argue that some abuses were exaggerated. C. Haigh editor of The English Reformation Revised (Cambridge, 1987). J.J.Scarisbrick, The Reformation and The English People (Oxford, 1984), C. Harper-Bill, The Pre - Reformation Church (London, 1990), E. Duffy,

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- 16 See note 2 above.
- 17 English Episcopal Acta, I. Lincoln 1067 - 1185, and IV. Lincoln 1186 - 1206, ed. D.M. Smith (Oxford, 1980, 1986).
- 18 The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280 - 1299, R.M.T. Hill ( 8 vols. L.R.S. 39, 43, 48, 52, 60, 64, 69, 76. 1948 - 1986).
- 19 Liber Antiquus de Ordinationibus vicariarum Tempore Hugonis Welles Lincolniensis Episcopi, 1209 - 1235, ed. A. Gibbons (privately printed, Lincoln, 1888).
- 20 Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae, ed. H.R Luard (Rolls Series, 1861).
- 21 Boniface's constitution was designed to offer facilities for education to promising young men who might have otherwise been lost to the cura animarum. L.A.O.Episc. Reg.III. fos. 1r. - 432r; IV. fos. 361r. - 392v.
- 22 The Register of Bishop Philip Repington 1405 - 1419, ed. M.Archer (3vols, L.R.S. 57, 58, 74, 1963, 1982).
- 23 The Register of Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln 1420 - 1431, i. ed. N.Bennett (Cant. & York Soc. 1984). This volume contains a preface, the sede vacante register and the institution registers for the archdeaconry Lincoln, Stow and Northampton. Other volumes are in preparation.
- 24 A.H. Thompson, The English Clergy and Their Organisation in the Later Middle Ages (Oxford, 1947) appendix, 55.
- 25 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. XXIV. fos. 1r. - 94r. Ordination Feb. 1496 - Dec. 1513.
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- 27 An Episcopal Court Book for the Diocese of Lincoln 1514 - 1520, ed. M.Bowker (L.R.S. 61, 1967). L.A.O. vj/12. Longland's Visitation of 1543.
- 28 Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia, ed. W.H.Hart and A.P.Lyons (3 vols. Rolls Series 79, 1884 - 94).
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## Patronage and Patrons

The large majority of old parish churches in England were founded in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In villages the initiative came from the ~~thago~~ who owned the village or from a group amongst the free elements in the population. Town parishes were created by landlords building churches for tenants on their property or citizens banding together to build themselves a church. A classic instance of this comes from Lincoln. The Domesday Book records that Colswein, an eleventh century builder, had been granted by the king some waste land on the south-eastern edge of the city. Here he had built thirty-six houses, and to serve the spiritual needs of the occupants two churches.<sup>(1)</sup>

The proprietary church system was rooted in the social and ecomic structure of late Anglo-Saxon society. The earliest churches were private churches or eigenkirchen, owned by local lords who had built and endowed them, therefore they had the right of choos~~ing~~ the priest and receiving from him an annual rent.<sup>(2)</sup> In addition, the lord of the church could transfer his rights by sale or gift to some other person and bequeath by will. A patron could receive a pension from a church, or promote one of his sons to the living, or any clerical member of his household. He could also, if he wished, alienate some part of the revenue from tithes to a religious house. As will be shown, many lay patrons did that and much more in alienating both lands and advowsons to the monasteries.

Much of the insecurity surrounding the appointment of a priest to a parish was to be removed during the implementation of the Gregorian reforms. Gregory VII (1073-85) had

determined to root out seignorial dominium over churches. His successors , especially UrbanII(1088-1099),applied his principles to parish churches, His legislation and that of his immediate successors was codified in the canons of the first and second Lateran Councils of 1123 and 1139. G.W.O. Addleshaw has pointed out that on the basis of this earlier legislation the popes of the second half of twelfth century and early thirteenth century, especially Alexander III(1159-81) and Innocent III(1198-1216), gave to parish churches a constitutional and administrative framework which, broadly speaking, still functions today.<sup>(3)</sup>

Canon 18 of the first Lateran Council of 1123 ordered that clergy were not to receive churches from laymen without the bishop's consent. Lay proprietary right was extinguished and replaced by the much more limited right of patronage, or right of advowson which carried with it the right of presentation. Under the new procedure the source from which a clerk derived his authority to be the rector or vicar of the church is the bishop and not the seigneur or lord of the manor. Apart from the right of presentation , a layman could now expect little material advantage from his church.<sup>(4)</sup> He could still, of course, promote the interests of his sons and clerks employed by him.

While a layman could now obtain no material advantage from his church , a monastery could benefit greatly. As C.R.Cheney and W.A.Pantin have pointed out , every position in the Church has two aspects, the one spiritual and the other temporal. For the parish priest, whether rector or vicar the spiritual is seen in the cura animarum, the care of all his parishioners. The temporal aspect is seen in the utilitarian concept of an ecclesiastical benefice, as a mass



of rights and emoluments to be received; tithes, fees, rents etc. (5) Canon law regarded the church as so much material property, to be divided and the revenues devoted to purposes outside the parish. Some benefices were very well endowed and could afford to assist with work outside the parish. For the most part, however, rich livings were given to those in high office, who needed the money from the church as payment for serving the king or some other lord, and to the monasteries.

Patronage or appointment to offices and benefices in the Church was exercised by a variety of persons: by the Crown, by lay magnates, by bishops and abbots, by other corporate bodies, such as cathedral chapters and colleges, and by local manorial lords .

#### **Crown Patronage**

Chief among lay patrons was the Crown which exercised a vast amount of ecclesiastical patronage made up in several ways. First, there were the appointments made by the Crown in its own right, pleno iure , such as the advowsons of Crown livings, the appointment to masterships of certain hospitals, and to the 'Royal Free Chapels'.

Although the king possessed comparatively few livings in the Huntingdon archdeaconry, he was able to exercise his patronage in other ways. He had feudal rights of wardship over the heirs of tenants-in-chief. During the period of wardship he was able to dispose of his wards' patronage, such as the advowson of churches. In addition , there was the regalian right, whereby, during the vacancy of a bishopric, the king took over the bishop's lands and revenues and also exercised the bishop's patronage of livings in his gift. Similarly, during a vacancy in an abbey or priory

the king had the right of presentation to any of the churches to which they possessed the advowson. These rights of presentation were very valuable to the king , as he could use them to present loyal servants to rich livings or important offices. It was here that the Crown most often came into conflict with the Papacy, which also specialized in these dignities for purposes of provision.<sup>(6)</sup>

During the Hundred Years War, when the king had custody of the alien priories, he was able use their advowsons to appoint his own nominees to livings. From all these sources the king derived a considerable amount of patronage. For example, 'it has been estimated, from the evidence of the Patent Rolls, that during the thirty-five years of the reign of Edward I, the Crown presented about 600 persons to about 1,000 benefices, thus disposing on an average of rather less than 30 benefices a year: and probably only about one in twelve of these presentations was made pleno iure, the rest being windfalls'.<sup>(7)</sup>

The Crown held but few advowsons pleno iure in the Huntingdon archdeaconry, until the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century, when a number of livings came into the king's hands. The advowson of Ripton Regis was in his hands , as the manor to which it was attached was an ancient demesne. It was not particularly wealthy as in the 'Valuation of Norwich of 1254, the living was valued at ten marks.'<sup>(8)</sup> Essendon together with the chapel at Bayford was also part of the king's demesne lands,<sup>(9)</sup> the latter being referred to in the Domesday Book as such. Hertford, St.Andrew was also a crown living, which was first mentioned by name in 1208 when King John granted it to

M.Adam of Essex, his clerk, for life.<sup>(10)</sup> In the Valuation of Norwich the churches are listed as being valued at twenty marks and eight marks respectively.<sup>(11)</sup> As can be seen, it was an advantage to be a king's clerk.

As has been said, the king possessed few livings in the Huntingdon archdeaconry de pleno iure, but he was able to avail himself of his regalian right to present clerks to vacant livings held by abbeys which were also vacant. Thus in 1239 Henry III presented Walter de Glouernia to Woodston (Hunts.) because he had custody of the vacant abbey of Thorney.<sup>(12)</sup> In 1251 he was able again to exercise that right when there was a vacancy in Offord Cluny and the abbacy of Cluny was also vacant. Domesday Book shows that the monks of Cluny held land in Offord from Arnulf of Hesdin. 'Before the death of the Conqueror some forty foreign Benedictine monasteries and cathedral chapters divided very unevenly amongst themselves property worth more than £1,000 (Domesday values) and scattered through twenty-five counties of William's conquest.'<sup>(13)</sup> Grosseteste's register reads, 'Andreas Poygnant, subdiaconus, presentatus per Dominum Regem ad ecclesiam de Offord Cluny, ratione manerii de Offord existentis in manu sua per vacationem Abbacie de Cluny(etc.), in ea canonice rector institutus'.<sup>(14)</sup>

The king used to the full the rights of wardship to promote his own nominees to livings. However, when Edward I first presented Andrew of Lincoln to Flamstead he was not in priest's orders, so the king had to re-present him. He was using his powers as guardian of the lands and heir of Sir Ralph de Thony (Tony). He was of course entitled to do this, but he also had to obey the pope and the ruling

laid down by Gregory X in his constitution thirteen, commonly called the licet canon, at the second Council of Lyons in July 1274. This canon enforced Alexander III's constitution Quum in cunctis which required the rector of a parish to be in his twenty-fifth year at the time of his institution, with satisfactory evidence of his knowledge and moral character, and to proceed to priest's orders, on due warning within the canonical period, under the penalty of deprivation. Accordingly, under these terms, Andrew of Lincoln had to be re-presented, and he was in fact ordained priest on the same day, 22 December, 1296, at Huntingdon priory church. (15)

An example of the power of the Crown may be seen in the dispute over the presentation to the church of Godmanchester in 1297. During the vacancy in the priory of Merton, Edward I had custody. Naturally, he presented his own nominee, Roger of Drayton, to Godmanchester. However, the presentation was opposed by Robert de Brok who had been presented by the prior and convent of Merton before the vacancy in the priory. Robert failed in his contest and resigned by letters patent sealed with the common seal of Merton. (16)

The Crown needed benefices to support its clerks, bishops, to support its policies, and money to support its wars. Cheyette makes the point that 'as long as monarchies remained penurious and clergy staffed the royal administration, it was obviously expedient for the kings to pay their wages from the Church's purse'. (17)

Henry III is recorded as having presented clerks to Essendon on three occasions between 1239 and 1259, and to Langley and Ripton Regis in 1224 and 1269 respectively. (18)

John Bezill or Besill, rector of Essendon, appears to be an

absentee rector, as he presented John of Hertford , a local man, as vicar of Essendon in 1244 ,and on John's death , he presented Richard of Littleport to the vicarage.<sup>(19)</sup> Bevill was evidently required elsewhere on the king's business. None of Henry III's nominees was a university graduate,unlike many of the clergy presented to churches in the gift of the religious orders.

Edward II presented to churches within the archdeaconry on seventeen occasions.<sup>(20)</sup> None of these clerks was a graduate. On 3 June,1309 he presented an acolyte,Thomas of Southwark,in the person of his proctor, William of Huntingdon, to the church of Caldecot(Hunts.),because he held the lands and tenements of Robert the Bruce(Brus),the Scottish enemy and traitor,as he regarded him.<sup>(21)</sup> Bruce automatically forfeited his rights on the grounds of treason.

The king was also able to avail himself of his rights when acting as ward for the heirs of Edmund Comyn,patron of Sacombe(Herts.)church; and the heirs of John de Ferrars, patron of Keston, and the heir of William de Langeton,late bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, patron of Offord D'Arcy.<sup>(22)</sup> When there was a vacancy in the abbacy at Westminster in 1317, Edward asserted his regalian rights and presented John de Senycourt,an acolyte, to Aldenham,in the abbey's patronage.<sup>(23)</sup> As he was in minor orders he could not celebrate Mass, so in February 1318 the king presented William de Overton,priest, to a vicarage in Aldenham.<sup>(24)</sup> Although there is no record of John de Senycourt's attending any university, he could have been one of the king's clerks.

Edward III's predecessors had long appreciated that the best way of maintaining good relations with the Church was

by controlling its personnel. Since the late thirteenth century the crown had deliberately set out to increase the number of benefices under its control.<sup>(25)</sup> Edward III made more use of the advowsons attached to the noble and ecclesiastical estates periodically falling into the king's hands. The wars with France provided him with an opportunity of increasing his patronage. From the Norman Conquest, several French abbeys held possessions, together with churches, within England. "These alien priories were something of a thorn in the flesh for the English: their French inmates rarely got on well with their English confreres and neighbours, and during the Anglo-French wars were regularly distrusted as potential spies", says Swanson.<sup>(26)</sup> The benefices under their control accounted for almost half the titles granted by Edward III between 1337 and 1360.<sup>(27)</sup>

Edward presented clerks to a total of 53 benefices in the archdeaconry of which over twenty presentations were in his direct gift.<sup>(28)</sup> As a result of the war with France he had custody of the temporalities of the prior and convent of St. Neots who held the advowsons of the churches of Huntingdon St. Clement: Huntingdon, Holy Trinity; St. Neots, and Everton cum Tetworth, and presented suitable incumbents on several occasions.<sup>(29)</sup>

In August 1343 he presented Robert de Morton, to Offord Cluny, as the patrons' rights (the abbot and convent of Cluny) were suspended during the war with France.<sup>(30)</sup> The king also had custody of the temporalities of Walmington Priory, a cell of the abbey of Grestein in Normandy, which was the patron of Berkhamstead St. Peter. The king took the advowson as the possession of an alien abbey.<sup>(31)</sup> Although it was

restored shortly afterwards, it was finally seized c.1384, from which date the Crown presented to the living until the castle and honour of Berkhamstead were granted to Cicely ,duchess of York,who held the advowson until her death.<sup>(32)</sup> When the lands of Wilsford Priory were in his hands for the same reason, the king presented William Bynell to the church of Hertford, St. Nicholas in 1374.<sup>(33)</sup>

A vacancy in the abbey of Westminster enabled the king to present his own candidates to Stevenage and Ashwell in 1333-34.<sup>(34)</sup> When there was a vacancy in Thorney abbacy, patrons of Yaxley, in 1350, Edward presented John Haddon,a kinsman of Islip, archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>(35)</sup> In 1349 a vacancy in Ramsey's abbacy meant a preferment for M.John de Felmersham, one of the few graduates in the archdeaconry, who was presented to Wistow by the king.<sup>(36)</sup> The king also presented to Brington and Walton, in the gift of the abbot of Ramsey, in the same year, 1349.<sup>(37)</sup>

He naturally rewarded those who were serving him or had served him. Thomas Neuby, although presented to several livings, lived in London and worked alongside David Wollore, keeper of the rolls of chancery. During the vacancy in Ramsey's abbacy he was presented to Cranfield ( Beds.) by the king in 1349.<sup>(38)</sup> Before 1364 he had resigned this living and is next found as rector of Somersham(Hunts.) and prebendary of Brampton in Lincoln cathedral. Although his institution to Somersham is not recorded ,it would appear that he <sup>(39)</sup> probably obtained it by an exchange with David Wollore. On 19 August, 1372 Neuby exchanged both Somersham and the prebend for the church of Bishop Wearmouth with Simon, cardinal priest of St. Sixtus.<sup>(40)</sup>

John Newenham, one of the chamberlains of the exchequer and one of the keepers of the king's treasure and jewels, was also duly rewarded by Edward III. On 18 December, 1349 he was presented by the Crown, as guardian of the lands and heir of Thomas Pabenhame, to Farndish (Beds.) and was instituted on 20 February following.<sup>(41)</sup> He held numerous other benefices between 1349 and 1363, when in 1363 he was presented by the Crown to Buckland Dinham prebend in Wells.<sup>(42)</sup> On 29 January, 1364-5 he exchanged this prebend for another in Chester and on the same day was presented by the Crown to Fenstanton (Hunts.), to which he was instituted on 5 February.<sup>(43)</sup> On 21 February, 1364-5, he was appointed a chamberlain of the exchequer.<sup>(44)</sup> By 20 May, 1368 he had resigned Fenstanton, and on 22 May, 1368 had a grant of the deanery of Wolverhampton.<sup>(45)</sup>

Occasionally, the king's right to present was disputed.. In 1331 John de Dene, kt. presented Robert de Wollee to the church of Conington. The advowson was disputed by the king who presented Geoffrey de Cotes. This was challenged in the King's Court, and a royal writ, dated at Westminster, 27 January 1332 notifies that the Crown had withdrawn its claim following an inspection of a fine levied in 1325-6 between Bernard de Brus and Agnes his wife (now the wife of John de Dene or Deen) querents and Robert de Brus deforciant. Robert de Wollee was duly instituted on 28 January, 1332.<sup>(46)</sup>

Evidently, the king did not give up so easily: in May 1335 John de Dene, kt. was again presenting to Conington. The advowson was disputed by the king who conceded the right of John de Dene and Agnes, his wife to present William de Islep in his court. The royal writ, dated at York, 26 May 1335 notifies that John de Dene and Agnes his wife had recovered their presentation.<sup>(47)</sup>



However, when the abbacy of Thorney was vacant, the king availed himself of his right to present to the church of Haddon, of which the abbey was patron. The advowson was disputed by the abbey, but the king recovered his presentation, dated at York, 26 June, 1335, and his presentee, John de Staunford, priest, was duly instituted on 23 August, 1335.<sup>(48)</sup>

The war with France continued to be a source of trouble for alien priories in Richard II's reign. The king made a total of twenty-nine presentations between 1378 and 1398 to churches within the archdeaconry of which ten were made as a result of the war with France. On 13 November 1378 he presented Thomas Gifford (Gyffard) to Bengoe on an exchange with Thomas Robinet of Burwash in Chichester diocese, as the temporalities of the patrons, the alien Priory of Bermondsey, were in his hands.<sup>(49)</sup> He exercised his right of presentation to Berkhamstead St. Peter on four occasions between 1381 and 1386, while the temporalities of the alien abbey of Greystein were in his hands.<sup>(50)</sup> Between 1384 and 1396 the king presented clerks to St. Neots on four occasions and to Everton, the advowsons of which were seized by him from the priory and convent of St. Neots, during the war.<sup>(51)</sup>

Richard was able to avail himself of his regalian rights when the temporalities of Westminster Abbey were in his possession and he presented M. Walter de Easton to Aldenham.<sup>(52)</sup> He was one of the few graduates to be presented by the king. Nothing appears to be known of him as he does not appear in the universities' registers. He was instituted on 12 May, 1384 at New Sarum.

On 9 February, 1391 Richard recovered his right of presentation in his court to Stanground church, in the patronage of the abbot of Thorney. Accordingly, on 19 February

1391 Hugh de Hanneworth was instituted.<sup>(53)</sup> On 29 June 1392 the king recovered his right of presentation to Ashwell church, in the patronage of the abbey of Westminster. The abbey had to withdraw their presentee, William Serthe, in favour of the king's nominee, Thomas of Lelenfield.<sup>(54)</sup>

While the temporalities of the vacant see of Ely were in his hands, the king presented his own candidate, M. William Kendall to Bluntisham, and John of Wendlyngborough to Hatfield, both churches in the gift of the bishop of Ely.<sup>(55)</sup> The penultimate entry in John Buckingham's register (1363-98) refers to the king's presentation of Walter Whitby, clerk to the free chapel of Watton at Stone on 3 July, 1398. Below the entry are three references to the recovery of the presentation against Thomas Sprotte in the curia regis at Westminster.<sup>(56)</sup> This illustrates the truth of Chief Justice Thorpe's remark, 'There is a great difference when the king is party and when an ordinary person is party'.<sup>(57)</sup> The remark was made of Edward III, but it was equally true of Richard II and his successors. The king was the most exceptional patron in England, indeed patron paramount, and neither he nor the horde of clerks who lived on his benefices were likely to forget it.<sup>(58)</sup>

Henry IV exercised his right of presentation on eight occasions. On 23 March, 1400 George Taillor (Tailor ?) was instituted to St. Nicholas Church, Hertford, on the king's presentation. However, Taillor did not remain long in the benefice, as the church was exchanged in 1401 when a certain John Martyn, described as rector of St. Nicholas, Hertford, exchanged with Richard Hewet, custodian of the chantry of St. Nicholas in the church of Winterbourne.<sup>(59)</sup>

The presentation to the church of Great Berkhamstead St. Peter was preceded by an inquiry, conducted by Robert Hodersale, S.T.P., rector of Little Berkhamstead as to how, when and in what way the vacancy in the church occurred, and who was the patron. It was revealed that the former rector was John Creeton who had died on 9 February 1406.<sup>(60)</sup> He could not have been very old, as he had been granted a licence for one year's study 'and to let his church to farm to William Cloth', rector of Hawridge on 5 July 1405.<sup>(61)</sup> The inquiry also revealed that the church was pensionable and that a pension of six marks sterling was paid annually to the king's treasury, but by what right or what reason is not known. The king was patron by reason of his dukedom of Cornwall. Richard II had held the advowson, although Michael de la Pole, then chancellor of England, had presented the aforesaid John Creeton.

The king then presented Thomas Byrd (Bryd), who was said to be 'of sound intellect, moral life and of an honest conversation and he had received the first tonsure as a clerk'. The document was sealed by the rector of the House of Ashridge at the request of M. Hodersale, as his seal was not known to many and dated 25 Februsry 1406. On 9 February 1407/8 Thomas Byrd was granted a licence by Philip Repington, bishop of Lincoln, for three years non-residence for study, in accordance with the constitution 'Cum ex eo'.<sup>(62)</sup> Such detailed entries are not common in the episcopal registers except when there is a dispute. In the above case there was no dispute so far as one is able to asvertain.

While the temporalities of Peterborough abbey were in his hands during a vacancy in the abbacy, Henry presented John Bulling to Alwalton church, which had been in the hands of the

abbot and convent prior to the Domesday survey.<sup>(63)</sup> In 1401 he was able to present his own clerk, John Stroklady, to a chantry at Hilton chapel, on behalf of Thomas, a minor and the son of Thomas, duke of Norfolk.<sup>(64)</sup> The remaining three presentations were made to Essendon and Baldock, the advowsons of which he held in his own right.<sup>(65)</sup> None of those presented by the king to benefices was a university graduate. On the whole, the monastic patrons too, found it difficult to obtain graduates for their livings.

Henry V presented only six clerks to churches in the archdeaconry between 1414 and 1422. Five presentations were made in his own right. These were to Essendon, Berkhamstead St. Mary, and King's Ripton, and on two occasions to St. Nicholas, Hertford, in his right as duke of Lancaster.<sup>(66)</sup> The remaining presentation was made on 22 August, 1422 to the church of Ayot St. Lawrence, when Hugh Wollet was instituted.<sup>(67)</sup> An inquiry was first held by M. Stephen Moynder, commissary general in the archdeaconries of Huntingdon and Bedford. It was found that the king was the true patron on this occasion, as guardian of John Barr, son of Thomas Barr, Kt., deceased, who had last presented to the church.

Henry VI is recorded in the bishops' registers as having presented to churches in the archdeaconry on fourteen occasions. One of the earliest presentations was made in 1453 when he presented John Högge, on exchange with the rector of Datchworth, to the church of Watton at Stone. He was the guardian of Philip Boteler, a minor, son of Philip Boteler, Kt. deceased.<sup>(69)</sup> A vacancy in the abbacy of Thorney also meant that the king could avail himself of his regalian rights and present a clerk to Stibbington in the patronage of the monastery. This he did on 26 October, 1457 and presented Robert

Kirkham. (70)

Unfortunately, not much is known about Henry VI's presentees, but occasionally, when a graduate is presented, more information becomes available. He presented clerks to Baldock church on five separate occasions between 1423 and 1459. (71) Four of these were by exchange. Robert Draper, was presented to Baldock by the king on an exchange with John Whittington (Whyt- (72) yngton) and the church of Medmenham (Bucks) on 7 October, 1454. He was among the more distinguished of the king's presentees. Emden records that he was a scholar at Coleshill Hall, Oxford in 1451. By 1455 he had received his M.A. He held several livings for a short period of time: Medmenham (Bucks.) from 24 May, 1454; by the following year he had exchanged it for the Little Rollright (Oxon). In September 1456 he exchanged Baldock for Cowden (Kent). (73)

John Turvey, who exchanged with Draper, remained in Baldock until December 1459, when he exchanged Baldock for Meesden in London diocese and his successor Henry Ropsley was presented by the king. (74) Some of the king's presentees remained but a short time in their benefices. William Watford was presented to Great Berkhamstead on 2nd June, 1432 and (75) was succeeded by John Staunton on 13 October, 1432. No reason for this is given, so William Watford could have died. John Staunton exchanged Great Berkhamstead with Michael James for Puttenham (Herts.) in the bishop's gift, in 1435, and both were instituted in London on 14 May, 1435. (76) Other presentations were made to King's Ripton and to Washingley, both in the king's gift in his own right. Washingley, originally in Ketelbert's hands in 1086, apart from its brief possession by Crowland abbey, was acquired by Richard de Washingley in exchange for a virgate of land. (77)

Thereafter the advowson was held by various lords of the manor of Wasingley. The king presented clerks in 1434 and 1439, By 1447 the church was in a ruinous state and was united with the church of Lutton(Northants.)(78)

Edward IV presented clerks on six occasions between 1462 and 1480 . His first presentation was on 12 October 1462 to Great Berkhamstead when Richard Plummer was instituted. (79) Nothing is known of this man. Two presentations were made to King's Ripton, in 1468 and 1472 respectively. On the latter presentation M.John Bedford was instituted on 4 October. He was a graduate in Canon Law of Cambridge, and had been rector of Hatley St.George(Cambs.) in 1461,This was exchanged for Little Chisall (Cambs.) in 1461. He remained there until 1472 when he came to King's Ripton, where he died in 1494.(80)

Two presentations were made to Baldock in 1474 and 1477.(81) M.Thomas Partington was instituted on 21 April, 1474 and resigned before October 1477. This appears to be the average length of time for any incumbent of Baldock.His successor, John Holdenby, presented on 11 October,1477, remained even longer, as he resigned in Richard III's short reign, before September 1483.(82) John Furneyt was presented to Datchworth by the king on 3 April, 1476 , but no reason is given for his doing so.(83)

Richard III made one presentation in the archdeaconry- to Baldock in the person of John Gilbert(Gilberd) who was instituted on 8 September, 1483.(84) His successor, Henry VII made fourteen presentations between 1485 and 1506.(85) A number were made in his own right as patron of King's Ripton, Great Berkhamstead, Essendon in his right as duke of Lancaster, and Baldock. Some notable presentations were made to Baldock.

On 14 November, 1485 M. William Exham (Axam) was instituted to Baldock. A Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, he had been a collector of university rents from 1473-4 and at the same time vicar of Brixworth (Northants.). He resigned the latter in 1477. He also held the rectory of Radwell, which he exchanged for the hospital or free chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, Clothall in 1491. He retained both Baldock and Clothall St. Mary hospital until his death in 1493. He was succeeded by M. Andrew Cheswright, S.T.B. (86)

During the vacancy in the abbacy of Thorney the king presented John Chauntrell to Water Newton. (87) When the temporalities of the diocese of Ely were in his hands, he presented M. John Toullard to Hatfield Episcopi (Herts.). (88) On the death of John Cromholm, chaplain of the chantry at Flamstead in 1493, the king presented Dom. Thomas Hunter. In 1503 the king made an unusual presentation to the church of Flamstead in the person of Peter Caversham, abbot of Notley (Bucks.), an Augustinian foundation. While it was not uncommon for individual canons to serve a parish, an abbot's doing so was unusual. He could of course have remained in his monastery and merely enjoyed the fruits of the benefice. He did not enjoy the fruits for long as he died in the following year and M. William Southworth succeeded him. The king presented on each occasion because he held the lands of the earldom of Warwick. (89) In 1504 Henry presented a scholar to Great Berkhamstead, a M. William Hone, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. He was represented at his institution on 21 July, 1504, by his proctor, John Hone, a literate-possibly a relative. (90)

The patron of Grafham church, John Broughton, was a minor, the son of Sir Robert Broughton, deceased, so the king pres-

(91)

sented his own clerk, M. William Wylton on 17 September, 1506. Henry VII presented more graduates to the parishes in the archdeaconry than any of his predecessors. With the improvement in education, more graduates became available. These were rewarded with the gift of valuable livings.

With the reign of Henry VIII came dramatic changes in patronage. He presented to churches in his gift on twenty-eight occasions.<sup>(92)</sup> Between 1509 and 1539 the king presented clerks only to those churches which he held de iure, that is to Ripton Regis, Hertford St. Andrew, Essendon (in his right as Duke of Lancaster) and Flamstead. The remainder of his presentations were made as a result of the suppression of the monasteries who held the advowsons of many churches. The first general act concerned with the dissolution of the monasteries was passed in mid-March, 1536. It was enacted that all religious houses of monks, canons, and nuns "which may not dispend manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments above the clear yearly value of £200 are given to the King's Highness, his heirs and successors for ever".<sup>(93)</sup>

A stay of execution was granted to the priory and convent of Huntingdon in 1538 on payment of a fine of £133 6s. 8d.<sup>(94)</sup> This exemption was short-lived, as on 29 January, 1539 Henry presented Thomas Mendall to Great Stukeley, one of the churches held by the prior and convent.<sup>(95)</sup> In the same year he presented John Wistowe to Bengeo, formerly appropriated to the abbot of Bermondsey.<sup>(96)</sup>

With the fall of the great monasteries, Henry acquired more advowsons. On 20 February, 1542 and again on 16 July, 1544 he presented clerks to Aldenham, formerly in the patronage of Westminster now dissolved. Aldenham was one of the



richer livings in the archdeaconry, valued at £24.<sup>(97)</sup> The king is also recorded in the institution register of John Longland as presenting clerks to Bottle Bridge, formerly in the patronage of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, on 6 December, 1541 and again on 8 August, 1546<sup>(98)</sup> His presentation to Willian was revoked in favour of Thomas Calton, a citizen of London, who presented Edmund Calton on 10 December, 1544.<sup>(99)</sup> Dartford priory had been the original patrons.

In addition Henry made presentations to the churches of All Saints and St. John Baptist, Huntingdon, the former in the joint patronage of Thorney abbey and Huntingdon priory, and the latter Huntingdon priory only.<sup>(100)</sup> The king made two presentations to Stanground, formerly under Thorney, on 25 November, 1545 and on 28 May, 1547.<sup>(101)</sup> He presented to Yelling, formerly in the patronage of Merton abbey, on 25 February, 1546,<sup>(102)</sup> and to Hamerton, once in the gift of Colchester abbey,<sup>(103)</sup> on 5 June, 1546.

Northchurch also came into Henry's hands, after his divorce from Queen Catherine. Hitherto, the queen had presented clerks who were men of distinction to the church.<sup>(104)</sup> Thus, on 30 October, 1540 the king presented M. John Perkins. Strangely the king presented few graduates to livings in the archdeaconry. Apart from the above-mentioned M. John Perkins, only three others were presented, and these to one parish, Flamstead. They were M. John Davenport, instituted on 16 May, 1512<sup>(105)</sup>, succeeded by a pluralist, M. Maurice Brithinshaw, who showed a dispensation allowing him to retain the vicarage of Berrynarbor in the diocese of Exeter.<sup>(106)</sup> On 18 April, 1538 his successor, M. Edward Leighton, S.T.B. was instituted.<sup>(107)</sup>

## Queen as Patron

While a reigning monarch had a large share of ecclesiastical patronage, his consort also possessed the right of presentation to a number of livings, some of which were in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. The earliest reference to a presentation being made by the queen in the archdeaconry is to be found in Richard Gravesend's rolls (1258-1279). On 4 May, 1275 Eleanor, queen of England, mother of the king Edward I, presented John de Castello to the church of Lilley in Hertfordshire. This was done with the assent of John of Brittany and his co-executors of Beatrice, countess of Richmond, by reason of the guardianship of the lands and heir of John Peyure, kt. , by the gift of the late king Henry, father of the said Beatrice.<sup>(108)</sup> On 23 February, 1276/7 she presented M. Thomas de Ruddepath to Willian.<sup>(109)</sup> No reason is given for this, but as the Peyure family were lords of the manor, presumably the son was still a minor, and so his guardian would present to the church. Once again the queen was allowed to exercise that right on behalf of Beatrice.

The right of presentation to the church of St. Andrew, Hertford appears to have rested with the queen since 1314, as queen Margaret, the wife of Edward I, presented Walter de Quenton 'iure dotis sibi assignato'.<sup>(110)</sup> This right continued with successive queens until the reign of Henry VII when in 1501 the king presented Thomas Shrayger.<sup>(111)</sup> As is the case with so many of those clerks presented by the Crown, little or nothing is known of the presentees, especially if they were not university graduates. In 1524 Henry VIII presented John Weyng to the same church in his right as duke of Lancaster.<sup>(112)</sup> The Crown is patron of this church in that same right today.

During the reign of Henry VIII, queen Catherine presented clerks to Northchurch St. Mary, Berkhamstead on four occasions. These were men of distinction: M. Christopher Plummer in 1520, succeeded by M. John Dent in 1522, on the death of the former.<sup>(113)</sup> He was succeeded by M. John Pernand Dr. of Decrees, in 1527.<sup>(114)</sup> On his death, the queen presented M. William Grene, S.T.P.<sup>(115)</sup> In addition Catherine presented to Great Berkhamstead, St. Peter, the neighbouring parish, on two occasions: on 11 September 1522 M. Thomas Abell, her chaplain was duly instituted. <sup>(116)</sup> He proved to be a loyal ally of the queen when Henry sought his divorce. He was responsible for one of the best defences of Catherine's marriage, the Invicta Veritas which was published abroad in 1530.<sup>(117)</sup> On the resignation of Thomas Abell, M. Richard Barker was presented by the queen to Great Berkhamstead in 1530.<sup>(118)</sup> This proved to be the last occasion on which she was able to exercise her rights.

For the most part, little is known of those who were presented to livings by the Crown. Occasionally the patent rolls reveal that the presentee was a member of the king's household or a king's clerk. For example, the rolls for 1413-1416 show that Henry V presented Brother Alan Hert, described as 'one of the clerks of the king's chapel' to the church of St. Mary, Northchurch.<sup>(119)</sup> Others presented to crown livings merit only one line, as in the case of Hugh Phillips (Philyps)<sup>(120)</sup> presented to King's Ripton on 20 February, 1459 by Henry VI. A little more is revealed about Hugh Phillips as one who did not pay his debts. In 1467 he failed to appear before the justices of the bench to answer John Walter, chaplain, touching a debt of 40s.<sup>(121)</sup> Such revelations are unfortunately rare.

## Lay Patronage

Those clerks who were in royal employment or at court were rewarded by the crown, as has been shown; but for those who were not king's clerks laymen offered another hope of promotion to a benefice. The large majority of old parish churches in England were founded in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In villages the initiative came from the thegn who owned the village.<sup>(122)</sup> After the Norman Conquest many of the churches together with their endowments passed into Norman hands.

The rights of patrons were never taken for granted. The council of Westminster, convened by Archbishop Anselm in 1102, decreed (c.17) that bishops should not consecrate new churches unless they were served by a suitable priest.<sup>(123)</sup> Similarly, control of lay wishes may be seen in canon 16 of the same council which states that no new chapel may be set up without the consent of the bishop.<sup>124)</sup> As M. Brett points out these canons show that the endowment, parochial status and services incumbent upon a church were already regarded in 1102 as properly the care of the bishop.<sup>125)</sup>

Thus, the bishops of Lincoln took great care in establishing the rights of patronage of anyone to a living. During the episcopate of Hugh of Wells (1209-35) the rights of a lay patron were called in question if he had been involved in the struggle between King John and the barons. William de Malebise, the patron of Enderby (Lincs.), was suspected of having been with the barons, and the bishop declined to institute his nominee, his son Robert, until he was satisfied as to his loyalty. Apparently it was found that William had been wholly paralysed for two years and could not therefore

have aided the barons, and so the bishop was satisfied. (126)  
Those who had been with the barons against the king had been excommunicated and could not exercise their rights as patrons until they had been restored to the church (ad unitatem ecclesie redierit). While several patrons of livings had been involved with the barons, none appears to have been patrons of churches in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.

Hugh of Wells' successor, Robert Grosseteste (1235-1253), had **clear** views on lay patronage. He felt that it was contrary to right that laymen were held to be patrons of a church, yet in actual practice he had to admit their rights while watching with a critical eye the manner in which they were exercised. (127) Shortly after his election as bishop of Lincoln, Grosseteste received a letter from a certain Master Michael Beleth, a king's clerk of some importance, criticizing his rejection of a presentee to a parochial cure. Grosseteste replied with savage courtesy. It seems that he had rejected a certain deacon, untensured and illiterate, 'pannis rubeis vestitum et annulatum, habitu et gestu laicum, vel potius militem'. He could easily have passed for a layman or a soldier in his ring and red outfit. The monk from an unnamed community who had presented this deacon had already been reprimanded in the severest terms and was told he would 'evidenter vadis in infernum' if that was all he cared about the blood of Christ. (128)

Thus, Master Beleth could see that no injustice had been done: the monk sponsor was exposing souls to death, souls for which he, Grosseteste, their bishop, was responsible before God. In his letter he showed Beleth that it was not enough to reject the presentee: the presenter also had to be rebuked.

R.W.Southern has pointed out that those whom Grosseteste particularly despised were clerks who held parochial benefices while engaged in secular government.<sup>(129)</sup> His attitude towards patrons was fearless, whether they were laymen, monastic houses, bishops, the king or pope. His concern at all times was that the right man for the job should be appointed.

This was not always evident in the attitude of lay patrons, who often presented or attempted to present clerks who were unworthy, either because of illiteracy or some other weakness. Even so the patron was a force to be reckoned with. While laymen in general were not allowed to stand in the chancels of churches during divine service, patrons and persons of rank (sublimium personarum) were allowed to do so.<sup>(130)</sup> A patron was a force to be reckoned with, and his standing in the chancel during divine service was symbolic. To the parson (persona) of a parish, the patron was not only the original giver of his benefice, he was often a near neighbour. He was in a position to harm or help.

The first call on a lay patron's charity was from his relatives and friends. Evidence from the twelfth century of the presentation of kinsfolk by lay patrons is lacking, but bishops' registers from the thirteenth century onwards provides ample evidence of patrons from time to time presenting relatives to livings. Sometime between 1209 and 1219 Saher de Littlebiri was presented by his brother John to the church of Diddington (Hunts.)<sup>(131)</sup> The relationship is also explicitly mentioned in the reference to Richard, son of Reyner, presented to the church of Shenley (Herts.) by Joan, matrem suam in 1221.<sup>(132)</sup> John, son of Simon de Dunmawe, was presented by his father to the church of Buckworth (Hunts.) in 1278-9; while in some cases

the relationship, although not stated, can be assumed. Thus, John de Gisortio, described as a citizen of London, presented Laurence de Gisortio, to the church of Sacombe ( Herts.) in 1277.<sup>(133)</sup> Between 8 and 14 July, 1325 Thomas de Segrave was presented by John de Segrave to the church of Fenstanton (Hunts.) On Thomas' death , John de Segrave presented John de Overton in the person of William de Overton, his proctor, on 24 February, 1338.<sup>(134)</sup><sup>(135)</sup> In 1339 John de Segrave Kt. again appears to be presenting a member of his family, in the person of Thomas de Segrave, to the church of Fenstanton on the death of John de Overton.<sup>(136)</sup> In 1352 the Segraves lost the advowson to Fenstanton to Edward III, and the patronage remained with the Crown until 1390 when it was granted to Thomas, Earl Marshal and Earl of Nottingham.<sup>(137)</sup> Thomas retained the patronage for only a short time, as in 1394 he alienated it to the dean and chapter of the king's free chapel of St. Stephen in the palace of Westminster, stipulating a yearly dole to poor parishioners and the ordination of a vicarage.<sup>(138)</sup>

Some were able to take advantage of their position in a household to advance members of their family. For instance, in 1243 Walter de Ageneburg, steward to the earl of Hereford ( de Bohun family), presented Giles de Ageneburg to the church of Kimbolton.<sup>(139)</sup> On the death of Giles, Lady Joan de Bohun presented M. Ralph de Bohun to the living, thereby keeping the rectory within the family.<sup>(140)</sup>

In July 1418 the archbishop of Canterbury, Henry Chichele, presented M. William Chichele, his nephew, to the rich living of Tring, which was in his gift.<sup>(141)</sup> Oliver Coren, prebendary of Buckden presented two members of his family in succession to the prebendal church of Buckden: M. Hugh Coren in 1514, and

M. Richard Coren in 1530. (142)

Several lay patrons received grants from monastic patrons allowing them to present their own presentees to livings. These grants provided an opportunity for some to present members of their own family. Since 1377 the Carthusian House of Salvation of the Mother of God, London had been patrons of the church of Great Staughton (Hunts.) on a grant from Richard II. (143) They in turn made a grant, for one occasion only, to Thomas Thwaite who took the opportunity to present a relative, M. William Thwaite, possibly his son, on 29 April, 1497. (144) Thomas Bennet took advantage of a concession granted to him by the abbot of Reading to present a relative, M. William Bennet, Ll.D. to the parish church of Aston (Herts.) in July 1527. (145)

Frequently lay patrons presented family livings to local men. For example, John of Orton Longueville (Hunts.) presented Robert of Orton Longueville to the church of Orton Longueville in 1247. (146) Hugh of Washingley (Hunts.) was presented to the church of Washingley by Walter of Washingley in 1248. (147) On 1 August, 1325 Simon Scot of Buntingford was instituted to the chapel of Buntingford. (148) Monastic patrons also presented local men to churches in their patronage, as will be shown. Local men had the advantage of knowing their parishioners and could provide good pastoral care, certainly better than that of absentee rectors whose concern was not with the parish, but with the income from it.

### **Bishop's Patronage**

The bishops of Lincoln, and indeed all bishops, possessed few advowsons, except in the case of their own manors. In the archdeaconry of Huntingdon they held the advowsons of Wheat-hampstead, Stilton and Puttenham. The latter had been held by



the prior and convent of Ashby until 1309 when they granted it to the bishops of Lincoln. (149)

However, the bishops were able to exercise their patronage more extensively under the terms of the third Lateran Council of 1179. Canon 13 of that council stated that if a patron failed to appoint to a vacant benefice within six months of the vacancy, the right of presentation devolved upon the bishop. Often lawsuits between patrons dragged on for longer than the stipulated period so the bishop was then able to exercise his right of collation. One of the earliest recorded disputes concerned the prior and convent of Canons Ashby and the nuns of Sandford (Oxon.) regarding the church of Puttenham (Herts.) which dragged on so long that Hugh of Wells (1209-35) was able to confer it on Jordan Warewicke, as it was then in his gift per lapsum. (150) A later reference to Puttenham shows that John Dalderby (1300-1320) presented John of Hardredshall to the church, now in the gift of the bishops of Lincoln, on 29 September 1309. (151)

Hugh of Wells used his right of collation on eight occasions of which two are described as taking place per lapsum and six as being either auctoritate Concilii or auctoritate Concilii Lateranensis. (152) John de Radewell, by reason of his wardship of the land of Caldecote (Hunts.) had presented Stephen de Holewell to the church of Caldecote. However, as he had taken six months to fill the vacancy, he forfeited his right to the bishop, who nevertheless collated the church to Stephen. (153) Among those to whom churches were collated was M. Nicholas de Evesham, one of his clerks, whose name appears on a number of documents as a canon of Lincoln. (154) He was given the church of Tring auctoritate Concilii Lateranensis. (155)

Robert Grosseteste(1235-53) rewarded his clerks with livings in his gift. Thomas of Fleet who was one of the witnesses of the institution to Fulletby in February,1249, received,as a (156) deacon ,collation of Sacombe(Herts.)auctoritate concilii.

Richard Gravesend(1258-79),like his predecessors,collated churches in his gift to some of his clerks. Thus,on 21 September,1272 Richard de Wik' had the church of Wheathampstead collated to him. He became a canon of Lincoln sometime in 1270.(157) He was succeeded on his death by another of the bishop's clerks,M.John de Leicester.(158) He appears to have had no other preferment in the diocese. No per lapsum collations in the archdeaconry for Gravesend's episcopate have been recorded.

M.John of Leicester was succeeded in Wheathampstead by Bishop Oliver Sutton's clerk,William of Stockton,on 23 November,1290.He became prebendary of Bedford Major on 15 January,1291.(159) No per lapsum collations were made by Sutton. His successor,John Dalderby(1300-20),apart from two presentations to Wheathampstead de iure in 1311 and 1315, (160) one to Puttenham in 1308,and to Stilton in the same year, made three per lapsum collations. The first was the collation of Sawtry St.Andrew to Thomas de Pykeburne on 12 September,1300,because Edward,earl of Gloucester,who had custody of the lands and heir of Robert Beaumeys, took more than six months to effect his presentation.(161) The patrons of Hertford, St.Nicholas,the prior and convent of Wilsford,also took over six months to present their clerk,so the bishop instituted Geoffrey de Stot on 1 March,1315.(162) The dispute about the right of presentation to the church of Great Gaddesden took longer than six months so the presentation devolved upon the bishop who instituted William

de Clifton.<sup>163)</sup> None of those appointed seems to have been distinguished in any way.

Henry Burghersh(1320-1340)was able to collate the church of Glatton to one of his clerks, M.Hugh de Camera,D.C.L. as a result of a dispute concerning patronage , on 19 August, 1321.<sup>(164)</sup> He was made prebendary of Empingham and it was collated to him on 22 October,1326.<sup>(165)</sup> Edward III granted the archdeaconry of Lincoln to him on 6 February.1327.<sup>(166)</sup>

Three other per lapsum collations were : Great Gidding to John Colman on 30 September,1321; Puttocks Hardwick chapel to John de Waterneuton on 7 December,1331 and Offley to John de la Welde on 25 September,1332.<sup>(167)</sup> Burghersh made one appointment to Puttenham de iure in the person of William Belevill on 17 July,1334.<sup>(168)</sup>

In his short episcopate Thomas Bek(1342-1347) made no per lapsum collations and,unusually,no vacancies occurred in any of the livings he held de iure. In contrast, John Gynwell(1347-1362) made three collations to Stilton between 1349 and 1361 and one to Puttenham on 1 July ,1362 when he collated the church to M.John de Navesby.<sup>(169)</sup> Two collations were made per lapsum : Shenley to William of Shelton in February,1351 and Steeple Gidding to John de Wood Newton on 1 December, 1352.<sup>(170)</sup> Nothing of any consequence is known of the clerks he instituted.

John Buckingham(1363-1398) in his long episcopate,collated only three churches per lapsum: Great Staughton to Richard Parker on 4 December,1365; Offord Cluny to Henry of Hungerford on 4 July, 1394 and Little Berkhamstead to William of Billesthorp, B. in L. on 7 July, 1397.<sup>(171)</sup> He made six appointments to Wheathampstead de iure. Richard

de Strensale on 10 January, 1365; M. Richard Swineshead on 31 January, 1375; Richard Claymond(?) on 12 July, 1376; M. John Thomas on 23 February, 1385; William de Grettewell on 24 July 1391.<sup>(172)</sup> All of the above clerks received their benefice by exchange. William de Grettewell, however, remained in the bishop's familia and received several preferments. When appointed to Wheathampstead he already held the prebend of Centum Solidorum. This was exchanged for the prebend of St. Botolph on 6 August, 1391. On 19 October, 1393 this prebend was exchanged for St. Martin's in Dernestall; but on the 3 December, 1393 he received the prebend of Carlton Kyme and was installed on 8 December. He was there between September 1396 and September, 1397.<sup>(173)</sup>

Henry Beaufort (1398-1404) had a short episcopate and left for Winchester in 1404. Only two collations are recorded in his register and both were in his own right: Puttenham to John Bromming on 10 October, 1399, and to a chantry at Waresley on 7 February, 1399, when Robert Swafeld was appointed.<sup>(174)</sup>

Beaufort's successor, Philip Repingdon (1405-1419), made only two collations to Wheathampstead. On 2nd October John Forest received the church. He had been made a penitentiary under the bishop's licence at Old Temple on 20 March, 1405/6, but strangely is already described as rector of Wheathampstead( rectori ecclesie parochialis de Wethamstede ac presbitero parochie eiusdem ad audiendum confessiones... )<sup>(175)</sup>

Forest already held the prebend of Banbury, which he had received from Henry Beaufort on 8 July, 1401<sup>(176)</sup>. On 18 March, 1415 William Warde received Wheathampstead on the bishop's collation, in succession to Simon Hoke, the last rector, who had resigned. Evidently, the bishop had collated

the church to Simon Hoke after John Forest, but there is no record of this in his register. (177)

Repington's successors, William Gray(1431-1436) and William Alnwick(1437-1449) made a single collation each to (178) Puttenham, and Alnwick in addition collated Wheathampstead on 3 May, 1449 to M. Thomas Simkin(?). (179) John Chedworth(1452-1471) made four collations during his episcopate : two were made to Little Berkhamstead , one to Throcking, all per lapsum , and one to Puttenham on 27 April, 1470 to M. John More. (180) Nothing is known of the presentees.

No entries per lapsum or de iure are recorded in Thomas Rotherham's register of institutions for the years 1472- 1480. He was followed by John Russell(1480- 1494) who made three collations per lapsum and three collations of Puttenham church to his clerks. Keston was collated to M. Richard, B.C.L. on 1 September, 1483; Broadfield to John Henryson on 12 February, 1489 and Caldecot to John Smyth on 12 June, 1493, all per lapsum . (181) Puttenham was used to assist his own clerks. Thus, on 3 May , 1482 Puttenham was collated to M. Thomas Hill. (182) . From 1486- 1502 he was a canon of Lincoln with the prebendal stall of Carlton Paynell. In 1502 he exchanged this stall for the prebend of Sutton in Marisco on 30 March, 1502. (183) On his resignation from Puttenham, Bishop Russell preferred another clerk to the church, M. Christopher Urswick on 21 December, 1482. M. Thomas Hill had held the parish for eight months. By 31 May 1488, Urswick held the prebendal stall of North Kelsey. (184) Preferment continued under Rotherham's successor, as Urswick became prebendary of Milton Ecclesia on 4 June, 1501, archdeacon of Huntingdon on 5 May, 1496 for a few months only, as he had

resigned by April, 1496. On 15 November, 1504, he was archdeacon of Oxford.<sup>(185)</sup> Urswick had resigned his living of Puttenham by 26 November, 1485, and the church was collated to M. Thomas Chauntre.<sup>(186)</sup>

William Smith, who succeeded John Russell as bishop of Lincoln in 1495, made one per lapsum collation to St. Nicholas Church, Hertford, to Thomas Robinson, on 15 July, 1501.<sup>(187)</sup> Two collations of Wheathampstead de iure are significant as they were made to scholars. The first was made to M. Geoffrey Symeon, D.Th. on 10 December, 1504 in commendam.<sup>(188)</sup> He was already chancellor of the cathedral, and on 16 March, 1506 he was installed as dean.<sup>(189)</sup> He was succeeded at Wheathampstead on 31 August, 1507 by M. John Smith, D.Th. On 3 September, 1507 he received the prebend of Stow Longa and was installed on 4 September, 1507.<sup>(190)</sup> Puttenham was collated to Hugh Milling on 30 April, 1507. Nothing is known of this man.<sup>(191)</sup>

Only one collation is recorded in William Atwater's register (1514-1521)- on 28 July, 1520 Puttenham was collated to Roger Calon.<sup>(192)</sup> His successor, John Longland (1521-1547) collated only his own churches of Wheathampstead, Stilton, and Puttenham to clerks of his own choosing. There was one per lapsum collation. Wheathampstead was commended to Richard Pates on two separate occasions before he was collated on 16 December, 1529. He received his first commendation on 4 June, 1524, the second on 9 April, 1526, and the church was collated to him on 29 May, 1526.<sup>(193)</sup> He already held a prebendal stall (Centum Solidorum) in the cathedral, which he resigned for the prebend of Cropredy, and was collated on 25 September 1525. He exchanged this for the archdeaconry of

Winchester with M. John Fox on 22 March 1527.<sup>(194)</sup> On 22 March, 1527 he was installed as prebendary of Spaldwick in Lincoln cathedral, and finally became archdeacon of Lincoln on 22 June, 1528. His career came to an end in 1542 when he was attainted for high treason and exiled.<sup>(195)</sup>

Those men who received the bishop's collation to his churches of Stilton and Puttenham appear to have been more mundane. M. Richard Key was instituted to Stilton on 3 February, 1531, and nothing is known of him.<sup>(196)</sup> John Migge was instituted to Puttenham on 30 January, 1533 and he was succeeded by James Vadham on 1 April, 1540.<sup>(197)</sup>

The solitary per lapsum collation of the church of Conington was made to M. William Wright, B.Th. on 7 August, 1539. Earlier in the year, on 11 February, he had been installed as prebendary of Crackpole St. Mary.<sup>(198)</sup> On 29 April, 1543 he resigned the prebend for the prebend of Decem Librarum.<sup>(199)</sup>

Wherever possible the bishops preferred men who were graduates and scholars to the churches which they held de iure. As has been shown, the opportunities for collating churches per lapsum were not very frequent. Those who showed ability were rewarded with churches and prebendal stalls. How far the men to whom they gave preferment really cared about the parishes cannot be assessed. Pastoral work would almost certainly have been carried out by assistant clergy, as no vicarages were ordained in either Wheathampstead or Puttenham.<sup>(200)</sup> Strangely, Stilton occurs but infrequently throughout the episcopal registers. .

### Clerical Corporations

A small number of churches were held by clerical corporations. The early charters of St. Paul's cathedral, London,

show that the churches of Ardleigh, Kensworth and Sandon were held by them. Between 1142 - 54 Robert, son of Roger de Rames, notified to Robert, bishop of London that he had confirmed to the monastery of St. John the Baptist, Colchester, of his right in the church of Ardleigh (Herts.).<sup>(201)</sup> In 1237 the abbot and convent of St. John the Baptist, Colchester confirmed to the church of St. Paul's, the rights of patronage and pensions in several churches, including Ardleigh, saving to the abbey a pension of thirteen marks and the right to present a vicar to Ardleigh.<sup>(202)</sup>

In 1291 a vicarage was set up in the church of Ardleigh. No mention was made of the right of the abbey to present a vicar to the church. M. Robert, archdeacon of Essex, acting on behalf of the dean and chapter of St. Paul's, London, presented the new vicar, Edmund of Clavering, to the church on 16 March, 1291. The offerings of all sorts are valued at eight marks, but the manse belonging to the said vicarage and within the churchyard was regarded as being unsuitable (non est satis competens). Matters were to be improved by the assigning of twenty acres of land, belonging to the said church, originally, to the vicarage. Bishop Oliver Sutton (1280-1299) also ordained that the vicar would receive 'all the altarage, namely, tithes of wool, lambs, milk, flax, hemp, geese, hens, piglets, calves, chickens, horses, orchards, commerce, dove cotes, and other smaller things that may be taxed, together with offerings of every kind and mortuary payments, and also twenty acres of land neighbouring that place, in which the rector of the said church before was accustomed to live'.

The vicar, for his part, was required to pay 'synodals, Letare Jerusalem, and to provide books, vestments and other



furnishings (ornamenta), a suitable light in the chancel, wine ,offerings, and he shall provide and maintain a suitable clerk'. The dean and chapter shall be responsible for the maintenance and repairs to the chancel. They are to be responsible for all extraordinary expenses and procurations. They are also required to repair the house which they have assigned to the vicarage,as is fitting. (203)

A visitation of the churches belonging to St.Paul's cathedral, carried out in 1297,show that both the chancel and the nave of the church were in a good state of repair (melius cooperiendum). The vicar had farmed out his twenty acres of arable land at ijd. an acre. (204) Thus both patrons and priest were working well together. A later visitation, carried out in 1458 showed that the chancel roof needed some repairs( defectum in coopertura scindularum)but the nave of the church, the responsibility of the vicar,was in a good condition( Nauis ecclesie stat in bone statu) . (205)

Kensworth church was appropriated by Walter Coutances, bishop of Lincoln(1183-1184) to the dean and canons of St. Paul's,London between 1183 -4. Provision was made for the ordination of a perpetual vicarage upon the death of the present incumbent . (206) The appropriation does not appear to have been carried out until 1266, when Richard Gravesend (1258-79) ordained a vicarage in Kensworth. (207)

The third Hertfordshire church to be held by the dean and chapter of St.Paul's was Sandon. Although the manor of Sandon was given to St.Paul's by King Athelstan(926-941),the church followed in 1184- 5, when Lucius III confirmed to the dean and chapter the church of Sandon together with the churches of Ardleigh and Kensworth, together with others in

Middlesex and Bedfordshire.<sup>(208)</sup> The visitation of 1297 showed that the chancel was badly roofed( male coopertum). No reference was made to the nave, but many details are provided of the church's books and vestments. The church was well equipped and the vicar, John of Abingdon, appears to have been looking after everything in his care. The church possessed a pyx for communion of the sick(vna pixis ad deferendum Eukaristiam ad infirmos).<sup>(209)</sup> The report of the visitation made in 1457 shows that the church was still being well cared for both by the patrons and the incumbent.<sup>(210)</sup>

The dean and chapter of Lincoln held the advowson of Great Paxton church (Hunts.). A series of charters gives the history of the transfer of the advowson of Great Paxton, and its chapels of Little Paxton and Toseland from the abbot and convent of Holyrood to the chapter of Lincoln.<sup>(211)</sup> Originally, the church formed part of the fee of the countess Judith, from whom it passed to David I of Scotland on his marriage with Judith's daughter, Maud. In 1161 Malcolm IV king of Scots granted the church of Great Paxton to the brethren of Holyrood, near Edinburgh. From 1157 to 1165 Malcolm IV was also earl of Huntingdon.<sup>(212)</sup> In 1232 the abbot and convent of Holyrood granted to bishop Hugh II and the church of Lincoln whatever they had in the church of Great Paxton or the patronage thereof by reason of right or last presentation.<sup>(213)</sup> On 20 November, 1273, Richard Gravesend(1258-1279) granted and assigned to the dean and chapter of Lincoln the church of Great Paxton in augmentation of the commons of the canons and the increase of divine worship.<sup>(214)</sup> On 19 December, 1273 Gravesend granted the advowson of the church to the dean and chapter of Lincoln, and ordained a vicarage in it on 8 June, 1274.<sup>(215)</sup>

The church of Great Paxton was richly endowed. In 1254 the valuation of the rectory was forty marks.<sup>(216)</sup> In 1291 the church with its chapels, including a portion in Scotton (Great Staughton), and excluding the untitheable portion of the vicars of Lincoln, was £26 13s. 4d. (i.e. 40 marks).<sup>(217)</sup> The value of the vicarage, ordained by Gravesend was £5 in 1291 and £16 6s. 1d. in 1535.<sup>(218)</sup> Those presented to the vicarage were for the most part undistinguished, remaining in the parish for a few years only. A notable exception was Thomas of Banbury who was vicar from 1276 until his death in 1295.<sup>(219)</sup> The first graduate to be appointed was Thomas Newton in 1517.<sup>(220)</sup> All those who succeeded him were graduates.<sup>(221)</sup>

In 1310 the dean and chapter of Lincoln received the church of Rushden (Herts.) from the prior and convent of Dunstable who had obtained a licence in mortmain to appropriate the church.<sup>(222)</sup> On 18 December, 1336, Henry Burghersh (1320-1340) ordained a vicarage in the church of Rushden. It was his intention that the new patrons should provide adequately for the priest who was to serve the cure. The dean and chapter were to pay the vicar an annual sum of eight marks, as the altarage from the church was poor. In addition the chapter were required to repair part of the rectory manse nearest to the church. They were also to be responsible for repairs to the chancel in excess of twenty shillings and to put the books, vestments and ornaments into good repair in the first instance.<sup>(223)</sup>

Both the chapters of St. Paul's, London, and the chapter of Lincoln appear to have been caring patrons, concerned for both the churches and the incumbents who served them.

## Prebendaries as Patrons

By the beginning of the fourteenth century there were fifty-eight prebends attached to the cathedral church at Lincoln. Four of these prebends had lands and churches in the county of Huntingdon. They were the prebends of Brampton, Buckden, Leighton Ecclesia and Stow Longa.

The establishment of prebends was a complex and lengthy process. Only a few prebends were founded with their endowment complete. Most gathered additional estates, churches, tithes etc. over a period of time. The papal confirmation of 1146 mentions several prebendal churches for which we have earlier evidence. Ketton and Gretton were in royal manors. Another eight were in episcopal manors, among which were Buckden, and Leighton Bromswold( Leighton Ecclesia). King Stephen granted the church of Brampton in prebendam between 1146 and 1149. The prebends in the bishop's manors of Stow St. Mary and Stow Longa were both in existence by 1163. (224)

The church of Brampton was part of the royal manor during Edward the Confessor's reign. Henry II confirmed the grant of the church made by king Stephen, referred to above, between 1155 and 1158. (225) This was confirmed by several popes between 1149 and 1163. (226) On 19 September 1277 bishop Robert Gravesend ordained a vicarage. The provisions were that the vicar should receive the altarage, and offerings at the four main festivals of the Church's year, and offerings of corn at the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, together with tithes of hens, piglets, flax, honey and of chickens, milk and calves, in the curtilage and wax. The vicar was responsible for providing the necessary lights in the church. He has also to collect Peter's pence and to

provide for a suitable clerk to serve the said church(clericum ydoneum dicte ecclesie deserviet). The prebendary was to be responsible for all ordinary and extraordinary burdens. The vicar was assigned a portion of the house which had been held by Lecie the glover. The prebendary, M. Geoffrey Pollard, is required to have built a suitable house within a year from the fruits of the benefice. (227)

The church of Buckden ,already in existence in 1086 in the bishop's manor, was confirmed by the pope on 6 February, 1146 as a prebend, and again in 1163.<sup>(228)</sup> On 16 March, 1277 bishop Richard Gravesend ordained a vicarage in the prebendal church of Buckden. This was constituted on the same lines as that of Brampton . Emphasis was laid on the saying of the divine office by the vicar and his assistants(et nihil aliud preter divinum officium exigetur ab eo). (229)

The church of Leighton Bromswold was part of the bishop's manor by 1072 and had been confirmed as a prebend by the pope on 6 February, 1146 , and confirmed again on 5 June, 1163.<sup>(230)</sup> A vicarage was ordained in the prebendal church by Robert Grosseteste on 10 September, 1248. The vicar is to receive all the offerings(oblationibus), tithes of lambs, wool, cheese, milk, mills of the lord of Leighton, fruits of the curtilage, hens, and fruits of all trees, and enough hay for one palfrey for the vicar for a year., and all the lesser tithes of the church of Leighton, and the chapel of Saln' (unidentified). The vicar is to bear all ordinary and customary burdens belonging to the church of Leighton. He is also to have a suitable chaplain to share the burdens of serving the church and its chapel. The bishop reserved the right to augment or diminish the (income from) vicarage,

as it may seem appropriate.<sup>(2310)</sup> The prebendary at this time was Roger Blund, the bishop's clerk. He presented Robert de Maperton as vicar. In 1262 Richard Gravesend, nephew of the bishop of the same name, was prebendary of Leighton Ecclesia and presented Reginald de Trocking as vicar. <sup>(232)</sup>

The last of the prebendal churches in the Huntingdon archdeaconry were Long Stow and Spaldwick in the manor of Spaldwick and attached to the prebend of Stow Longa. The two churches had been given to the bishop of Lincoln in compensation for loss of estates at the time of the foundation of the see of Ely in 1109.<sup>(233)</sup> Stow Longa was confirmed as a prebend by the pope on 6 February, 1146 and again on 5 June, 1163.<sup>(234)</sup> It is also mentioned as a prebend in the Valuation of Norwich in 1254.<sup>(235)</sup> A vicar of Spaldwick is mentioned in Grosseteste's register, but the first recorded presentation is to be found in Gravesend's register when Thomas de Hayton was presented by M. John de Maidstone (Maydenestan), described as 'rector of the prebendal church of Longa Stowa'. Reginald, vicar of the prebendal church of Leighton (Lehton) is to induct.<sup>(236)</sup> John de Maidstone moved on successively from the prebend of Stow Longa to the archdeaconry of Bedford before 18 September, 1268 and to the archdeaconry of Oxford by 18 January, 1273, and was dean of the cathedral by 23 November, 1274.<sup>(237)</sup> Details of the vicarage attached to the prebend are not available, but they would certainly be similar to those ordained in the other prebendal churches. Details of Stow Longa church are also not available. The earliest reference to a vicar of Stow Longa found in the bishops' registers is in that of Bishop Beaufort (1398-1404)

when Rober Merston exchanged his vicarage of Stow Longa with Thomas Bolour for a chantry chaplaincy in the church of Bottlebridge(Botolph's Bridge). Thomas Bolour was instituted on 10 July, 1400.<sup>(238)</sup> On 12 February,1420 Thomas Browne was instituted to 'Langstowe' as it is described 'with Spaldwick' . Evidently, at times both vicarages were occupied and served by the same man.<sup>(239)</sup> The average vicar presented to these prebendal churches during the fifteenth century remained in his church for a lengthy ministry. Henry Clifton was instituted to Spaldwick on 27 November,1408 and died sometime before 12 February 1420, when his successor ,Thomas Browne, was instituted.<sup>(240)</sup> Sometime between Thomas Browne's departure,either by resignation or death, William Bunday was instituted, but there is no record of his institution. He died in 1458, and was succeeded by William Manning who was instituted on 25 May,1458.<sup>(241)</sup> Manning died in 1480 and was succeeded by Robert Stawe who remained there until his death in 1503.<sup>(242)</sup> It would appear that the church had a period of stability during that century, whereas in the fourteenth century the church had twelve incumbents, none of whom remained longer than seven years in the parish.

### Colleges as Patrons

The early history of the church of Diddington(Hunts.) shows that the patrons were the Littlebiri family. John de Littlebiri (Littlebury) gave fifteen acres of his land to the church and the advowson to Walter de Merton.<sup>(243)</sup> He gave it to his college at Oxford (Merton) and a vicarage was ordained in 1278. The vicar would receive all the altarage and the lesser tithes and offerings and twenty acres of arable land de feodo ecclesie . In addition the vicar is to receive the

sum of forty shillings annually from the masters and scholars of the house of scholars of Merton, described as 'dicte ecclesie rectoribus', who presented a graduate, M. Ralph de Leicester as the first vicar under their patronage.<sup>(244)</sup> Very few who followed him were graduates.

Great Gransden also experienced a change of patrons. Earl William of Gloucester(1147-1183) granted the advowson to the abbey of St. Augustine, Bristol between 1150 and 1166.<sup>(245)</sup> This was confirmed by count John between 1189 and 1 November 1191.<sup>(246)</sup> However, as was frequently the case, the family did not always approve of their property being alienated in this way. In 1295 the advowson was recovered by an exchange by Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester.<sup>(247)</sup> On partition of the honour, it was assigned to the youngest of the heiresses, Elizabeth de Burgh. She then presented clerks to the living. Her last presentation was made in 1333 when Thomas de Chedworth was instituted on the death of John de London.<sup>(248)</sup> In 1346 she gave the advowson to the master and scholars of Clare Hall, Cambridge.<sup>(249)</sup> On 2 January, 1354 the master and scholars made their first presentation to Great Gransden. At the same time a vicarage was ordained, setting out the emoluments to be received by the new vicar. Apart from a suitable house, he is to have seventy-nine acres of arable land, and one and a half acres of meadow land, together with the lesser tithes and offerings of the altar. The master and scholars of Clare Hall are to receive the greater tithe.<sup>(250)</sup>

The Engayne family were patrons of the church of Waresley(Hunts.), but in 1351 John Engayne alienated the advowson to Mary, countess of Pembroke.<sup>(251)</sup> In the following year she obtained a licence to grant it in mortmain to



Valence Mary Hall, later called Pembroke College, Cambridge, (252) and for the warden and scholars to appropriate the church. In 1377 the new patrons presented Thomas de Waresley, evidently a local man, to the vicarage, which had been newly ordained on 31 May, 1377. The vicar is to have a house, all the glebe of the said church, together with tithes of wood, the coppice, hay, lambs, wool, milk, calves, piglets, geese, chickens, hens, honey, flax, hemp, garden,. The vicar is to bear part of all ordinary dues of the church, and the warden and scholars of Valence Mary Hall shall bear two parts. (253)

In 1467 the advowson of Orton Waterville church passed into the hands of John, earl of Worcester, lord of the manor of Orton Waterville. (254) It was donated by the executors of Laurence Booth, archbishop of York (1476-1480) who had acquired it, to Pembroke College, Cambridge. (255) In 1526 the vicarage is said to be worth £13 6s. 8d. (256) Other details concerning the vicarage are wanting.

The last of the Huntingdon churches to be given to academic patrons was Abbotsley. In 1340 Edward III gave the advowson to Sir William Felton with permission for the latter to grant it to Balliol College, Oxford, and for the college to appropriate the rectory. (257) On the death of William Kingston, the rector of Abbotsley, the church which was valued at forty marks, was appropriated and a vicarage ordained. It had received papal confirmation on 28 April, 1342, but could only be implemented on Kingston's death or resignation. (258) Between 1382 and 1543 eleven vicars were instituted to the church of whom only four were graduates. (259) The clergy who served the church of Abbotsley are noted for their long

periods as vicars of the parish. For instance, M. William Willesthorp, instituted on 29 July, 1382, by John Buckingham (1363- 1398) resigned in 1424. He had thus served the church for almost forty-two years.<sup>(260)</sup> His successor, Hugh Beverych, served the church from 1424 until his death in 1463, again an unusually long ministry.<sup>(261)</sup> His death was followed by a period of short-term ministries, averaging between two to six years. In 1478 M. Robert Brigham was instituted and served the parish until his death in 1501.<sup>(262)</sup> He was succeeded by M. Robert Pierson, who died in 1519, thus serving the parish for almost eighteen years.<sup>(263)</sup> His successor, Richard Backhouse, instituted on 19 January, 1519 remained in the parish until his death in 1541, for a ministry of over twenty one years.<sup>(264)</sup> The parish had thus had a period of stable ministry over a long period of time.

#### **Miscellaneous Patrons**

When the new diocese of Ely was formed out of the old diocese of Lincoln in 1109 the bishop received the patronage of churches which had formerly been in the hands of the abbot and convent of Ely. He was thus able to reward his own clerks who had been of service to him with the churches of Bluntisham (Hunts.), valued at £13 6s. 8d., and Somersham, also in Huntingdonshire, valued at £33 6s. 8d.. In Hertfordshire he held the churches of Kelshall, valued at £13 6s. 8d. and Hatfield, valued at £36 13s. 4d.<sup>(265)</sup>

Among those presented by the bishop of Ely to the above livings during the thirteenth century were several who were graduates. M. Nicholas de Nordwald was presented to Hatfield in 1241.<sup>(266)</sup> In 1271-2 the subprior and sacrist of Ely, on behalf of their bishop, Hugh of Balsham, presented

Ralph of Walpole, the archdeacon of Ely, to Somersham . Walpole, who became bishop of Norwich in 1289 and was translated to Ely in 1299, was instituted. The vicarage was consolidated with the rectory for his benefit, only on the understanding that he was to reside(in dicta ecclesia personaliter in proximo residere, et curam ibidem in propria persona agere personalem). Subsequently, however, by special licence, he was allowed to hold the church in commendam and serve the cure by deputy. (267)

M.Guy of Tilbrook resigned from Somersham sometime before 15 March,1292. The date of his institution is not given, and on 25 January,1298 he was instituted by proxy to Hatfield. (268) Evidently, he had secured another benefice, possibly in the diocese of Ely, but he was able to return to the diocese of Lincoln when he was presented by the bishop of Ely to Hatfield.

Among those who benefited from the bishop of Ely's patronage in the fourteenth century, was M.John Brian,Dr. of Decrees. He was well-connected, having Sir Guy Briene,Kt. and Reynold Brian,bishop of St.David's ,as his brothers. He was instituted to Hatfield on 30 August,1349. (269)

Bluntisham was served by a series of clerks in the bishop of Ely's employ. From 1460 successive bishops of Ely presented scholars to Bluntisham: M.Henry Strother(1460), M.Richard,D.Th.(1480),M.Thomas Alcocke,D.Cn. & C.L.,(1491), (270) and M. Robert Hyndemer, D.Th.(1527). It is possible that these learned clerks held other benefices in the diocese of Ely.

Kelshall appears to have been favoured with the ministry of two brothers or close relatives: on 15 June,1419 Richard

Vantort was instituted to the church. On 10 July ,1420 he was followed by John Vantort.<sup>(271)</sup> Between 1454 and 1495 six magistri were instituted on the presentation of successive bishops of Ely.<sup>(272)</sup>

For a time Walter Langton, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (1296- 1322) was lord of the manor of Offord Daneys, sometimes described as Offord D'arcy. As a result he was also patron of the church of St.Peter, Offord Daneys. He made five presentations to the living between 1307 and 1322 .<sup>(273)</sup> Three of those presented were in priest's orders, namely, Peter of Askern, instituted in 1307, John, son Richard, called Clerk of Riston, instituted in 1314, and William of Wykingeston, instituted in 1318. The others, Richard of Norton, instituted in 1313, and M.Walter of Stratton, instituted on 1 February, 1321, were both acolytes. On the bishop's death, the king, Edward II, administered his estate on behalf of his heir, and presented Henry of Stratebrok, priest, to the church on 24 May, 1324.<sup>(274)</sup> Thereafter the presentations to the church were made by a member of the late bishop's family.

Although a number of advowsons of churches were in lay hands, they frequently passed into those of others, who were not monastic foundations. This was the fate of Fenstanton. The manor of Stanton was held by Leonard Stanton, succeeded by his son Richard, and then by Robert Stanton.<sup>(275)</sup> In 1229 there was a dispute concerning some land in Fenstanton, which Gilbert Stanton asserted belonged to the church. The land was finally adjudged to be the lay fee of Gilbert.<sup>(276)</sup> The advowson probably escheated to the Crown. In 1236 the advowson was granted by Henry III to his sister Joan, queen of Scotland.<sup>(277)</sup> It passed with the manor to the Seagrave family until 1352

when Edward III recovered in an action against John Segrave and William Overton, clerk.<sup>(278)</sup> The patronage remained in the king's hands until 1393 when it was granted to Thomas earl marshal, who himself alienated it to the dean and chapter of the king's free chapel of St. Stephen in the palace of Westminster.<sup>(279)</sup> Some who were instituted as vicars of Fenstanton from 1397 remained in the parish for a number of years. John Hammond, who was instituted on 16 July, 1454, resigned in 1479, accomplishing a ministry of almost twenty-five years.<sup>(280)</sup> His successor, John Redgrave, remained there until his death in 1525.<sup>(281)</sup> The vicarage was valued at £12 0 s. 4d. in 1535.<sup>(282)</sup>

#### The Religious Orders As Patrons

After the Conquest the new manorial lords from Normandy frequently gave the churches in their possession, together with the endowments, to religious foundations which they favoured. It was an expression of the laity's continuing devotion to the monastic ideal. There was nothing new in this, but the process was accelerated, that by the end of the twelfth century almost a quarter of the parish churches in the country were in the hands of monastic communities.<sup>(283)</sup> Both English, and (during the earlier part of the period) French monastic houses benefited.

The motives behind most of these grants by the laity were mixed. There was the donor's desire to secure spiritual rewards of good works; the knowledge that he and his family could be assured of the monks' prayers. There was also the knowledge that it was considered, especially since the Gregorian reforms, inappropriate for a layman to hold a church. These reforms served to check and erode lay ownership of

churches. Lay proprietary right was extinguished and its place taken by the right of patronage or right of advowson. It carried with it the right of presentation to a living. There was little material advantage to be gained from a layman's holding of a church. It was thus a small sacrifice to make for a layman to grant his church to a monastery.<sup>(284)</sup> Possession of a parish church was of considerable or actual value to a monastery.

Grants of churches by donors to religious houses were made in terms no different from those used in grants of land or rent to the religious. A grant made by Robert de Valoynes between 11 June 1177 and before April 1182 reads, 'Know that I ... have given and conceded to the canons regular of Waltham the church of All Saints of Hertford with all its appurtenances in perpetual alms'.<sup>(285)</sup> Henry de Merch's grant to Thorney abbey reveals the uncertainty as to the rights donors still retained in their churches. Between 1154 and 1158 he granted to Thorney abbey the church of Stibbington as 'the advowson and lordship which I had in the church of Stibbington'.<sup>(286)</sup>

In 1102 the Council of Westminster had decreed that monks were not to accept churches other than from bishops (Ne monachi ecclesias nisi per episcopos accipiant ....).<sup>(287)</sup> This canon would naturally make lay donors cautious about the grants they made to monasteries. B.R.Kemp cites the example of a grant being made in the presence of the bishop. The bishop of Hereford, Gilbert Foliot, was present when Walter de Mans gave the church of Humber (Herefordshire) to Brecon priory, and confirmed the grant.<sup>(288)</sup> No references from early charters in the archdeaconry are available. However, there

is local evidence of the bishop's being informed of grants of churches being made in the archdeaconry. Often he was asked to confirm such a grant. A grant of the church of Glatton was made by the abbot of Doudeauville to the abbey of Missenden in perpetuity, subject to an annual pension of six marks. This was confirmed by bishop Hugh of Lincoln between 1195 and 1198.<sup>(289)</sup> Between 1199 and 1213 William de Bokland made a grant of the church of Aldbury and all the rights he had within it, and its appurtenances..<sup>(290)</sup> This too was confirmed by bishop Hugh at the same time, and recorded in the Missenden cartulary.<sup>(291)</sup> It is not clear which bishop Hugh is meant, as Hugh of Avalon died in 1200, and Hugh of Wells became bishop in 1209. It became common practice for monasteries to seek episcopal confirmation of grants of churches, if the donors had not already sought it from their diocesan bishops.

### **Appropriations and Vicarages**

Monastic houses were by definition 'Christ's poor' and had the need of money and gifts to carry out their work. On becoming patrons they frequently sought episcopal approval to appropriate the revenues of a church to themselves and engage a clerk for the parish.<sup>(292)</sup> The appropriating monastery would thus acquire for itself the rectory and would be the rector appropriate. Once a deed of appropriation had been sealed by the bishop who granted the rectory to their own use ( in proprios usus ) the corporate body then had the right to use the endowments of a church for its own needs.

There were two kinds of appropriation, either cum pleno jure , that is an appropriation in temporals and spirituals, or in temporals only. Appropriation in temporals only was the

more common form. The monastery or other religious corporation, that is cathedral chapters or colleges, became the corporate rector of the church in regard to endowments. Part of the endowments would be formed, under episcopal authority, into a vicarage for the maintenance of a priest to exercise the cure of souls. The latter became a perpetual vicar with security of tenure, as will be shown.

One of the earliest recorded appropriations was made during the episcopate of Robert Chesney (1148-1166), when William and Hubert de St. Clare petitioned the bishop to grant their church of Hamerton to the monks of St. John, Colchester cum omnibus suis pertinentiis et proventibus in usus proprios perpetuo possidendam. (293) A vicarage had also to be ordained.

Kimpton in Hertfordshire was the sole church from the Huntingdon archdeaconry to be appropriated during Hugh of Avalon's episcopate (1186-1200). It was confirmed in proprios usus to the prior and convent of Merton, saving a perpetual vicarage. (294) As Merton was an Augustinian foundation the prior could have placed one of his own canons to serve the church, but there is no evidence that he did. At one stage, William, described as 'capellanus domine Regine', was presented by Merton priory to the vicarage. (295)

During the thirteenth century the number of appropriations increased. The Liber Antiquus of Hugh of Wells (1209-1235) records some eighty deeds of appropriation and details of 300 perpetual vicarages. Forty-three fresh appropriations are recorded, although it is difficult to sort out the new appropriations from mere confirmations. (296) In the Huntingdon archdeaconry the Liber Antiquus lists twenty



ordinations of vicarages in appropriated churches of which six are regarded as being made ab antiqua or ex dudum.<sup>(297)</sup> The rest were ordained auctoritate concilii. This was the fourth Lateran Council of 1215, which bishop Hugh attended.

The number of appropriations varied considerably with each monastic order. Some religious houses preferred to retain churches unappropriated in order to attract priests who would perhaps be useful to them at court or in some other capacity. On receiving a grant of a church from a donor a monastery could do one of two things: appoint a rector and receive a pension from him or seek to appropriate the church, and so receive the whole church and employ a vicar, removable at will.

An example of this may be seen c.1150 when the church of Warboys was given to the almonry of Ramsey. Two priests had a life interest in it and were to pay a pension to the almoner; when they both died, he was to have the rectory and all the income. Robert of Lincoln (1148- 1160) confirmed the arrangement.<sup>(298)</sup> As was shown above, the abbey at Colchester had been given permission to appropriate Hamerton church and to establish a vicarage in it. Evidently, it was decided not to do this, as presentations made by the abbot to the church in the thirteenth century show that the church was still a rectory, and all those instituted to it had to pay a pension of sixteen marks annually. Details of the grant of a pension from the church of Hamerton to the patrons, Colchester abbey, are given in Grosseteste's register. The rector is to serve in the office of a priest, bear all episcopal and archidiaconal dues and all other customary dues, together with sixteen marks, nomine simplicis et perpetui beneficii to be paid to the patrons, the abbot and

convent of St. John, Colchester. The grant was given at Liddington on 18 May 1237. (299)

Grosseteste, while he did not approve of lay patronage of churches also did not approve of the appropriation of churches by monasteries. In the document, sometimes referred to as his 'sermon', delivered to the pope at Lyons in May 1250, Grosseteste discussed the right use and abuse of pastoral care. He believed that pastoral care could not be carried out by middlemen or mercenaries. He felt that the situation became worse where churches were appropriated to monasteries, for then the use of mercenaries became permanent. (300)

Grosseteste's long-standing dispute with the abbot and convent of Westminster concerning the church of Ashwell in Hertfordshire illustrates how seriously he took the problems of appropriation. The abbot's wish to appropriate the church resulted in him being excommunicated by the bishop and the church being laid under an interdict. (301) An indult of Honorius III sanctioned the acquisition of the church by the abbey of Westminster for 'the maintenance of the brothers, of guests and of the poor'. The bishop had to carry out the necessary legal requirements, granting the abbey full rights in the church. Even so, Grosseteste ordained a vicarage valued at forty-five marks, thereby showing his disapproval of the appropriation. (302)

Concern about appropriations was shown in Richard Gravesend's episcopate (1258-79). In obedience to a papal mandate of 1261, directing him together with the bishops of Worcester, Salisbury, Coventry and Llandaff to make a particular inquiry into the appropriation of churches by monastic houses, they held a general investigation. (303) Further

appropriations took place, but only six were made in the Huntingdon archdeaconry. On 9 July, 1266 a vicarage was ordained by bishop Richard Gravesend in Kensworth church, in the patronage of the dean and chapter of St. Paul's cathedral, London. The dean and chapter were to receive the major tithes of corn and hay from the fields in the parish. The vicar should be a literate and upright man ( vir literatus et honestus ) who should be in priest's orders and he is to reside and minister personally in the place , and of his charity provide hospitality to guests and to the poor so far as he is able. For his subsistence he was to receive all the lesser tithes , mortuaries and offerings, and all the altarage. He was to have the house in which the chaplain used to live with all the land which the vicars thereof used to hold. The dean and chapter were to receive the major tithes for their own use, but they would be responsible for all ordinary burdens , and the vicar would be responsible for a third portion of any extraordinary burdens .(304)

Similarly, Gravesend ordained a vicarage in Great Paxton, in the patronage of the dean and chapter of Lincoln, on 8 June, 1274. The details are the same as those for Kensworth, except that the arrangements for a new vicarage house are given. The vicar is to have for his mansum that piece of land in the southern part of the church cemetery, lying next to the land belonging to John Harderishill, and stretching in length from the king's highway in the west as far as the king's highway in the east. In the first instance, it is to be built and enclosed at the expense of the dean and chapter. Chaplains are to be provided to serve the dependent chapels of Little Paxton and Toseland. (305)

Richard Gravesend was noted particularly for his establishment of vicarages in the prebendal churches which were attached to stalls in his cathedral church. Great Paxton had been a rectory in his own gift, until he gave the advowson to the dean and chapter and ordained a vicarage. Some vicarages had already been ordained in the prebendal churches, while others were new ordinations. On 16 March, 1277 a vicarage was ordained in the prebendal church of Buckden. Apart from the usual arrangements, outlined above, the prebendary was to bear all ordinary burdens both in the building and construction of the chancel and in (supplying) books and other ornaments of the church, and all other extraordinary burdens on a pro rata basis. (306)

Brampton vicarage, also attached to a prebendal stall, was ordained by Gravesend on 19 September, 1277. The vicar here is to be responsible for collecting Peter's pence and to be responsible for it to the archdeacon according to ancient custom. A suitable mansum was to be built for him. (307)

The advowson of the church of Hemel Hempstead church together with its chapels of Bovington and Flaunden was in the hands of Edmund, earl of Cornwall, but in 1278 he gave the churches together with their appurtenances to the Cistercian abbey of Hailes. (308) On 7 June, 1279 Gravesend ordained a vicarage in Hemel Hempstead combined with one in the church of Northleigh (Oxfordshire). A later reference to the latter reads' indorsantur in rotulo institutionum de Huntingdon. (309) The provisions for a vicar do not appear to be particularly generous. He is to receive forty sillings annually at Easter and at Michaelmas. However, the bishop reserved to himself the power to augment it. (310)

As has already been shown, appropriations from the thirteenth century onwards were invariably linked with the ordination of a vicarage. Frequently in the past vicars had been appointed with little or no security of tenure. In an attempt to make their position more secure, when churches were appropriated by a monastery or other corporation or even an individual, bishops provided for the cure of souls by ordaining a second benefice in a church, that is, a vicarage. The priest appointed was always known as a vicarius perpetuus underlining his permanent status and security of tenure.

Professor C.R.Cheney has shown that such vicarages had already been set up in the twelfth century. He provides evidence of a vicarage having been established in the church of Puttenham, in the patronage of the Augustinian priory of Canons Ashby (Northants.) between 1167 and 1185. Richard of Tring has to pay the canons an annual pension (311) of twelve pence. In another document, issued at the same time Richard is described as personam ecclesie de Puteham, also having to pay twelve pence, by way of a pension, to the prior and canons of Ashby. (312) Nicholas de Sigillo was the archdeacon at this time. Apparently, these acts were not confirmed, Other examples of appropriations and perpetual vicarages having been established in the twelfth century have been shown (supra) at Hamerton and Kimpton.

The episcopate of Hugh of Wells (1209- 1235) marked a new departure. The impetus for his reforming zeal was provided by canon 32 of the great fourth Lateran Council of 1215. The council had drawn attention to the fact that in some churches the parish priest was receiving only one-sixteenth of the revenues of the church 'whence it is that in these

regions scarcely any parish priest can be found who has even a modicum of education'. The decree went on to declare that in future the priest must receive a decent wage and become a perpetual vicar. (313)

R.A.R.Hartridge has described this canon as the 'Magna Carta' of the parish priest.<sup>(314)</sup> The two foundation stones of the vicarage system were security of tenure and a minimum stipend. The annual chaplain was at the mercy of his employer, who was under no obligation to pay him any specified amount, and who could dismiss him at will. The vicar, on the other hand, was a beneficed priest with his freehold from which he could not be dislodged, and he had a stipend, which, if not princely, was at least secure.

Although he may be chosen by the rector, with the patron's approval, or even by the patron, the bishop commits to him the cura animarum in the church, and it is to the bishop that he is responsible for his cure. He cannot be removed, save for crimes or grave dereliction of duty, and then only by judicial procedure, once he has taken legal possession of his church.

The rector of a parish, whether a corporate body or an individual, would usually receive the major portion of the church's revenue. This, in country parishes, would be the major tithes of corn and hay and also land, unless it were otherwise specified. The vicar would receive the lesser tithes, the altarage, mortuary dues etc., and he would have to be provided with a suitable place in which to live.

However, the word 'altarage' can be given no hard and fast meaning. Hugh of Wells' records show that the altarage can consist of the small tithes, that is, tithes of mills

and tithes on every kind of natural production, and on the labours of men. They could also be mentioned alongside the small tithes as a separate item. Thus, the vicar of Slepe in Huntingdonshire, appropriated to the abbot and convent of Ramsey, received 'omnes minutas decimas et obvenciones altarium'. (315) The vicar of Great Wymondley (Herts.) had a modest income as the ordination of the vicarage consisted of 'toto altaragio cum manso competente et in una acra in uno campo et alia in alio'. (316) No mention is made of lesser tithes. Evidently, the altarage plus the land was regarded as being sufficient for his needs. On the other hand, Richard de Brantone, instituted to Great Stukely (Hunts.), is to receive all the altarage, and a suitable messuage next to the church and all the lesser tithes and fruits of the church, saving to the prior and canons of Huntingdon tithes of corn, of hay, of mills and lands of the church, and all tithes of their demesne wheresover they come. The church was worth (317) twelve marks annually, and the vicarage was worth five marks.

Obventions or offerings mentioned in many of the thirteenth century institution rolls varied a great deal. Dues were paid at Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, and on the feast day of the church.

At Bygrave (Herts.) the vicarage consisted of the following:

Oblations of All Saints ' Day	...	...	1s. 0d.
Carruage of All Saints' Day	...	...	9d.
Oblations of Christmas Day	...	...	7s. 0d.
Oblations of Christmas Day (bread) ..	...	...	8d.
Oblations on the Feast of the Purification			
		of B.V.M.	3s.0d.
Confessions and Whitsunday	...	...	2s.0d.

eggs	...	...	...	...	...	...	2s.	0d.
cheese	...	...	...	...	...	...	1s.	0d.
Oblations of St.Margaret's Day	...	...	...	...	...	...	16s.	0d.
Oblations of Easter Day	...	...	...	...	...	...	6s.	8d.
bread	...	...	...	...	...	...		8d.
lambs, wool and flax	...	...	...	...	...	...	20s.	0d.
small tithes and all other obventions							10s.	0d.
two quarters of wheat and three of hay from the parson's barn								6s. 8d.

Sum total 6 marks 3s. 5d.

This vicarage is an example of one established in a church which had a lay patron, John de Sumeri. In 1223 Peter de Alto Bosco was presented to the church as rector, saving to Hugh his perpetual vicarage of five marks.<sup>(318)</sup>

Offerings made in church came from different sources. There were those made from the occasional offices:weddings, the churching of women, and for funerals. Penitents who came to make their confessions were encouraged to make an offering. In addition to money offerings the clergy were accustomed to receive a number of oblations in kind. The eulogia or bread offered at the altar was part of the oblations. Some of this bread was used in the service, the rest was for the use of the priest.<sup>(319)</sup>

Hugh of Wells endeavoured to ordain vicarages at values not less than five marks. His efforts were strengthened when the council of Oxford declared that the minimum stipend for a perpetual vicar should be five marks a year.<sup>(320)</sup> In 134 vicarages mentioned in the Liber Antiquus, where the values are given, fifty are assessed at less than five marks, sixty-three between five and six marks, and twenty-one at over



six marks.

Some vicars were very poorly paid. St.Mary's church, Huntingdon was valued at twenty shillings, plus meals for the clergy and their houseboys. The record reads:

'A vicarage was ordained in the church of St.Mary, Huntingdon, which (belongs to ) the canons there, by the authority of the council. The vicar shall have in the name of his vicarage one corrody of a canon at the canons' table and twenty shillings annually; namely ten shillings on the feast of St.Michael and ten shillings at Easter for a stipend to be received from the fruits of the aforesaid church. The vicar's clerk and his boy are also to be welcomed at the prior's table with clerks and their boys ' .(321)

The list below shows that some vicarages ordained in the Huntingdon archdeaconry were worth fifty per cent of the whole church:  
(322)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Value of Vicarage</u>	<u>Value of Whole Church</u>
Hemingford Grey	4½ marks	9 marks
Great Stukely	5 marks	12 marks
Great Gidding	5 marks	10 marks
Little Gaddesden	4 marks 16d.	100 shillings
Winwick	4 marks	8 marks

Whenever a vicarage was considered to be inadequate, bishops endeavoured to augment them. Thus during Henry de Lexington's short episcopate(1254-1259)the vicarage in Winwick, which had been valued at four marks during Hugh of Wells' episcopate, was increased by one mark annually:a half mark to be paid at Michaelmas and a half mark at Easter from the treasury of the prior and convent. With this increase

the record states that' valet sic adaucta vi marcas'. (323)  
Evidently, the value of the vicarage had been increased to five marks during Grosseteste's episcopate, but was still regarded as insufficient. In 1258 Richard Gravesend (1258-1279) is recorded as reserving the right to augment the poor living of Bengeo (Herts.) when he saw fit. (324)

There are many references to the provision of a suitable house (mansum competentem) for a newly-instituted vicar. Such houses were found for the most part near the church, with such descriptions as 'next the church', 'opposite the church-yard gate', 'before the church door'. In the ordination of a vicarage at Great Paxton, as was shown, the vicar is to have an area set aside near the king's highway and on part of the churchyard. (325)

It would appear that the patrons of Ardleigh, the dean and chapter of St. Paul's cathedral, London, had neglected their responsibilities. In 1291 bishop Oliver Sutton (1280-1299) found that the house which the dean and chapter were seeking to assign to the vicar was unsuitable (incompetenciam) and they are to have it repaired. (326)

Some clergy had to forgo a little of their independence. Thus, as has been shown (supra), the vicar of St. Mary, Huntingdon had his meals at the table of the canons of Huntingdon priory. Similarly, John de Aiete, vicar of St. Mary, Hertford is to receive bread and ale daily, and a potage like a monk, and eight shillings and eightpence annually from the prior (of Hertford). (327)

The successive bishops of Lincoln throughout the thirteenth century seem to have been of one mind in their disapproval of appropriations. Oliver Sutton expressed his

views very strongly when he authorized the appropriation of the church of Corby (Lincs.) to the nuns of Stamford in 1284. He asserted that 'alienations and appropriations of parochial churches ,by converting the fruits and profits of them to the use of religious persons, were absolutely odious to all the prelates of the church, and had been forbidden by a late law, nor could be tolerable save in the cases of manifest poverty or other great necessity'.<sup>(328)</sup>

It is not known whether the fourteenth-century bishops of Lincoln approved of appropriations or not. Five Hertfordshire churches and eight Huntingdonshire churches were appropriated during this century. Rushden, as has already been shown, was appropriated to the dean and chapter of Lincoln in 1310, but a vicarage was not ordained until Bishop Burghersh authorized it on 18 December, 1336.<sup>(329)</sup> The church of North Mimms, which was in the patronage of the prior and convent of Charterhouse, London, was appropriated , and a vicarage ordained by John Buckingham (1363-1398) in 1383.<sup>(330)</sup>

In 1391 the rectory of Aldenham was appropriated to the abbot and convent of Westminster, when the monks undertook to keep the anniversary of Richard II's coronation on St. Swithun's day. This was approved by John Buckingham with the proviso that the appropriation was to take effect on the death of the present incumbent.<sup>(331)</sup> A vicarage was ordained in 1399. The vicar was to have a hall, chambers and other domestic buildings ,together with a garden. He was also to have the small tithes, an arable close of seven acres with one rood of meadowland. The church was valued at £38 13s.4d.<sup>(332)</sup> in 1392. By 1535 the value of the church had diminished<sup>(333)</sup> to £24, according to the valuation carried out in that year.

Two Hertfordshire churches were appropriated to the same religious house in the late fourteenth century. The advowson of Great Gaddesden church was held by the prioress and nuns of Dartford (Kent), held in trust on their behalf by the bishop of Salisbury, John Waltham and Warin Waldegrave. The prioress in turn, held for the use of the prior and convent of the Order of Preachers of King's Langley, as they were forbidden by their rule to acquire lands to themselves in perpetuity. The licence was granted in 1393 and the church appropriated. (334)

A composition was made with the vicar that he and his successors should have the tithes belonging to the church and the parsonage for his mansum. In return, he would pay an annual pension of twenty marks for the house of the friars of King's Langley. The grant was confirmed by Henry IV in 1399. (335)

In 1385 Nigel Loring, the patron of Willian church in Hertfordshire, granted it to Robert Braybrooke, bishop of London and others. (336) The bishop in 1394 conveyed it to the king, who gave it to the prioress and convent of Dartford on condition that they should appropriate it to the use of the friars at King's Langley. (337) The grant was confirmed together with that of Great Gaddesden in 1399. (338)

The eight churches in Huntingdonshire which were appropriated were Yaxley (1314), Abbotsley (1340), Somersham (1349), Waresley (1352), Glatton (1353), Great Staughton (1377), Southoe (1377), and Kimbolton (1378). Abbotsley had had a succession of patrons. The exact date of the abbey of Jedburgh's ownership of the church is uncertain; but in 1272 John Ridel was unsuccessful in his attempt to recover

the advowson.<sup>(339)</sup> However, during the wars with Scotland the right of presentation was forfeited to the king.<sup>(340)</sup> On conclusion of the peace in 1328, the abbey petitioned for the restoration of the advowson, but was unsuccessful, and the king retained the advowson.<sup>(341)</sup> As has already been recorded the advowson passed into the hands of Balliol College, Oxford, who were allowed to appropriate the rectory.

The permission to appropriate a church was given not only to religious communities or other corporations but also to individuals. Thus, in 1349 the bishop of Ely, who held the advowson of Somersham, was given permission by Clement VI to appropriate to his episcopal income one of the following churches: Hadenham, value £80, Leverington, value £85 and Somersham, value £35, 'seeing that his possessions are held of the king in capite and can be confiscated by royal mandate and applied to royal use. Granted as to one of the above churches which the bishop may choose. Given at Avignon 5 Ides September, 1349' (9 September). The bishop chose to appropriate Somersham.<sup>(342)</sup>

Waresley, as was shown in an earlier chapter, was given by Mary, countess of Pembroke, to Valence Mary Hall, Cambridge (later Pembroke College) which was allowed to appropriate the church. Glatton was a part of the foundation gift made to the abbey of Missenden by the abbey of Doudeauville between 1195 and 1198.<sup>(343)</sup> In 1353 Edward III gave a licence to the abbot of Missenden to appropriate the church because of its impoverishment by a great dearth in past years.<sup>(344)</sup>

Great Staughton, like many other parishes in the archdeaconry, had had several patrons before its appropriation in 1381. In 1178 the church was confirmed to Ramsey abbey

by Pope Alexander III.<sup>(345)</sup> Between 1178 and 1238 the patronage of the church had passed into lay hands. Grosseteste's register records the details of the licence given to Vitalis Engayne to have a private chapel in his hall at Delington within the parish of Great Staughton (Stocton) and Sir Geoffrey de Mandeville is described as patronus ecclesie de Stocton.<sup>(346)</sup> By 1279 the advowson was held with the manor and Anselm de Gyse is referred to in the Hundred Rolls as the patron.<sup>(347)</sup> Eventually, Richard II acquired two acres of land and the advowson of the church from Thomas de Wells in Norfolk, and in 1381 he granted the same to the prior and convent of Charterhouse, London.<sup>(348)</sup> This grant together with the authority to appropriate the church was confirmed on 14 May 1393 at Westminster.<sup>(349)</sup>

The church of Southoe was granted to the prior and convent of St. Mary, Huntingdon by Elias de Huntingdon sometime before his death in 1231. The gift was confirmed later by his brother Nigel de Amundeville.<sup>(350)</sup> In 1377 the priory received a licence to appropriate the church and the chapel of Hail Weston.<sup>(351)</sup> The appropriation was followed by friction with John Tubbe, the incumbent. On 1 August 1381 an agreement was drawn up between the prior, Henry de Rokesden, and John Tubbe whereby 'the said John Tubbe, rector of Southoe would hold the church. The prior and convent would pay him an annual pension of 35 marks until he should be presented to some rectory by the procurement of the said prior and canons or their friends, and then the true annual value of the said church should be deducted from the annual pension of 35 marks. But if the aforesaid John Tubbe be presented to any rectory by any other than the said prior and convent

or at their procurement so that he gains peaceable possession thereof from that time ten marks of the thirty-five shall be deducted ,and the said prior and convent shall be exonerated (352) from paying the said ten marks to the said John for ever.'

The church of Kimbolton was in the hands of the lord of the manor until Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, granted it in mortmain to the prior and convent of Stonely, with power to appropriate the church . The grant was dated 10 March, 1366, and ratified on 13 July, 1366. (353) However, Pope Urban VI (1378- 89) revoked all appropriations during his pontificate. His successor, Boniface IX(1389-1404) confirmed the appropriation on 6 July, 1397. As the earlier appropriation had not taken effect and did not hold good, the bishop of Lincoln, John Buckingham, was ordered to appropriate the said church, its value not exceeding forty marks. A portion for a perpetual vicar had to be reserved. He made the further grant that the said vicarage , value not exceeding £10, may be served by one of the canons. (354) The church had in fact been served by one of the canons since 1378 when Fr. Adam Wykynggsthorp was instituted as vicar on 10 May. (355) He was succeeded by Fr. Richard Beaumys in 1379 and by Fr. William Brampton in 1391 who remained there until 1404. (356)

#### **Monasteries and Their Churches**

At the beginning of the thirteenth century eighty-three churches out of a total of 150, plus their chapels, had monastic patrons. The Benedictine abbey of Ramsey in Huntingdonshire, founded in the year 970, was the powerful patron of eighteen churches, and held them until the dissolution. These churches together with some attached chapels and a fair at St. Ives in

Easter week were confirmed to the abbey by Pope Alexander III in 1178. The confirmation of the churches concludes with the pope's allowing them to choose honest and suitable persons to be presented to the bishop ( ...vestris liceat vobis de honestis personiis presbyteros eligere,et dyocesano episcopo praesentare,quibus, si idonei fuerint ,episcopus curam animarum committat... ).(357)

Sawtry ,All Saints church was mentioned in the above charter, but it is certain that the patronage was probably granted with the manor some years earlier to Hervey le Moigne or Moyne.<sup>(358)</sup> Nowhere is there any record of Ramsey abbey's presenting clerks to Sawtry, All Saints. In 1226 Philip de Horeby presented Richard de Routlest, a subdeacon, to Sawtry rectory in right of the dower of his wife Alice de Baumville.<sup>(359)</sup> Thereafter the le Moigne family remained patrons of the rectory.<sup>(360)</sup>

Although Ramsey was the largest parish in Huntingdonshire, it had no parish church,as such . **There** could of course have been a monastic church which townspeople could attend. A chapel was built at Bury, near the town of Ramsey. In 1139 Pope Innocent II referred to it just after it had been built as 'being situated next the monastery where your (the abbot's) servants hear Divine Service'.<sup>(361)</sup> The abbots had the unusual privilege of collating the church without presenting the clerks to the bishop of Lincoln, as Bury was in the ban-lieu of Ramsey where the abbot had episcopal rights. W.M. Noble comments that the churches of Ramsey,Bury,Upwood and Little Raveley were built after the manors came into the posession of Ramsey Abbey. The abbots appointed incumbents under the title of curates,without any reference whatever to



the bishop of the diocese. This right of appointment remained in the hands of the lords of the manors down to recent times, and while this condition existed there are no records of institutions in the episcopal registers.<sup>(362)</sup> However, it is known that a church existed at Ramsey before 1291 as there is a return of it in Pope Nicholas' Taxatio.<sup>(363)</sup> It is possible that this was the monastic church used only by the monks and the laity were welcomed there until the church at Bury had been built.

Among the eighteen churches held by the abbot and convent were the comparatively rich livings of Houghton with its chapel of Wyton, valued at £33 6s. 8d., Therfield, valued at £33 6s. 8d. , Elton, valued at £23 6s. 8d. , Abbots Ripton, valued at £23 6s. 8d. , and St. Ives, valued at £25.<sup>(364)</sup>

It was the custom of religious houses to present to their best livings public men upon whose support they could rely, whether with the Crown or with their diocesan. Thus during Gravesend's episcopate (1258- 1279) his official, M. John of Lindsey, prebendary of Louth, was rector of Houghton until his death in 1276. He was succeeded by Dom. Hervey de Borham, a clerk of the royal exchequer, instituted in the person of his proctor, Robert de Ros on 26 June 1276.<sup>(365)</sup> A notable priest had been appointed to Elton in the person of Henry of Wingham who was allowed to retain the living on his consecration as bishop of London (1260 - 1262).<sup>(366)</sup>

It was of course advantageous for a monastery to have a number of prominent secular clerks in its benefices. Roger of Raveningham, archdeacon of Huntingdon, who died in 1276, was rector of three churches in his archdeaconry, Catworth, in private patronage, Yaxley, in the gift of Thorney abbey,

and Warboys, in the gift of Ramsey abbey.

Evidently, the abbey continued its practice of presenting their livings to notable clerks, as on 19 September, 1361 Michael Ravendale, a clerk in chancery, was instituted to the church of Hemingford Abbots, in its gift. He succeeded M. Robert de Swinfen who had died. (368) In 1361 M. John Carleton, D.C.L. was presented to Houghton. (369) He was succeeded in 1366 by M. John Carleton, D.C.L. on an exchange on 21 May, 1366. (370) He is described as 'junior'.

In 1476 M. William Constable was instituted to Therfield and M. Robert Belamy to Hemingford Abbots, both of whom became prebendaries of Lincoln cathedral. In 1482 Constable was prebendary of Leighton Ecclesia, although there appears to be some doubt about this. (371) However, there is no doubt about Robert Belamy's installation as prebendary of Centum Solidorum on 1 November, 1483. (372)

Hemingford Abbots appears to have been blessed with scholars, although how many were resident in their parish it is difficult to assess. On 7 October, 1524 M. John London D.C.L., was instituted to the church of Hemingford Abbots. He remained as rector of the parish until his death in 1544. How much time he was to give to his cure of souls it is difficult to say, as he was a canon of York and prebendary of Bilton until 1542. In 1522 he became treasurer of Lincoln. He held the vicarage of Atterbury (Oxford) until 1542. (373) In Foxe's Acts and Monuments he is described as 'heartless in his dealings with Lutheran suspects at Oxford (374) in 1528 and at Windsor in 1543'. He was totally opposed to Cranmer, and would probably have been an ally of the conservative bishop John Longland.

The prior and convent of Huntingdon held twelve churches: in Huntingdon they were All Saints (alternate presentation with Thorney abbey), St. Benedict, St. John Baptist, St. Edmund, St. Martin, St. Mary; Hartford, Hemingford Grey, Great Gidding, Southoe, Great Stukeley, Winwick. Unlike those churches belonging to the abbey and convent of Ramsey, their churches were not of great value. Three of their churches, St. John, All Saints and St. Benedict in Huntingdon are omitted from the Taxatio of Nicholas IV, but they are mentioned in the earlier valuation of Norwich as being valued at three marks, four marks, while St. Benedict's has the words vix valet serv-icium after the entry.<sup>(375)</sup> Other churches are not even recorded. St. Edmund, Huntingdon, although not mentioned, is shown in John Dalderby's register (1300- 1320) to have been united with St. Mary's church, Huntingdon, in the patronage of the abbot and convent of Thorney in 1312.<sup>(376)</sup> Their churches of Hemingford Grey, Great Stukeley and Southoe were valued at fifteen marks, twenty marks, and twenty-four marks respectively.<sup>(377)</sup> An earlier valuation of Hemingford Grey and Great Stukeley in Hugh of Wells register (1209- 1235) gives the value of Hemingford Grey at nine marks and five marks respectively; Southoe is not mentioned.<sup>(378)</sup> Hugh of Wells' Liber Antiquus shows that vicarages worth four and a half marks and five marks respectively had been ordained in Hemingford Grey and Great Stukeley.<sup>(379)</sup> The episcopal records show that local men served these vicarages.

The richest livings in the archdeaconry were held by the prior and convent of Merton who were patrons of four churches: Alconbury, valued at £33 6s. 8d.; Godmanchester, valued at

£40; Yelling, valued at £12, and Kimpton(Herts.),valued at £16 13s. 4d. (380)

Alconbury had been in the king's hands until its appropriation by a gift of Henry II. (Item advocac(i)o ecc(lesi)e de Alkmu(n)debir' solebat e(cclesi)e in manibus p(re)decessoribus Reg' & data fuit P(ri)ori & (con)ve(n)tui de Merton in proprios usus ex dono Regis Henr' veteris.) (381)

The vicarage is said to have been ordained ab antiquo, and the vicar receives all the lesser tithes and offerings belonging to the church, except the tithe of corn, and he is responsible for the costs of an episcopal visitation(et sustinebit omnia onera episcopalia). (382) In 1179 Pope Alexander III confirmed the possessions of the prior and convent of Merton. (383)

Among the possessions referred to in the above confirmatory papal bull was the church of Godmanchester. In 1284 the endowment of the church consisted of forty-eight acres of land, seventy-five acres of meadowland held by the prior of Merton in commutation for all the tithes of hay. (384) Strangely, there is no mention of the grant of the advowson of Yelling church to Merton priory in its charter of confirmation of 1121; but it is mentioned in the papal confirmation of 1179. (385) Unlike Alconbury, Godmanchester and Kimpton, Yelling remained a rectory, and seems not to have been appropriated.

A charter, datable between March 1195 and 16 November 1200, confirms to the prior and canons of Merton the church of Kimpton in Hertfordshire in usus proprios. The vicar is to have 'all the offerings of the altar, all mortuaries, the whole of the land ( belonging to the) church, all lesser

tithes, over and above also the tithes of Biggleswade, both of the demesne of the village of Biggleswade where the church of Kimpton has a third of the corn of the land of the men of that village..... He is also to have the house which Richard ,the priest, of happy memory, used to inhabit'.<sup>(386)</sup> This appears to be a generous endowment , possibly better than many vicarages ordained during the twelfth century.

The churches seem to have attracted no very distinguished scholars, although a number of vicars gave long service. Thomas de Eyton was vicar of Alconbury from 1312 until his death in 1348.<sup>(387)</sup> None of the vicars of Godmanchester remained for a very long time in the parish, but the parish attracted a number of graduates during the fifteenth century. M.Thomas Boteler, instituted in 1459, was succeeded by M. William Stevens, Lic. in Decrees, in 1470, to be followed by M.John Elys in 1481. He remained for a very short time, and was succeeded by M.Richard Whytford in 1482. He remained in the parish until his death in 1492, when he was succeeded by M. Robert Aghton<sup>(388)</sup> All those who succeeded in the following years were graduates. The living was worth £20 in 1526.<sup>(389)</sup>

The abbot and convent of Westminster held three valuable livings in Hertfordshire, namely, Ashwell, worth £26 13s.4d., Aldenham, worth £22 13s. 4d., and Stevenage, valued at £26 13s. 4d. in 1291.<sup>(390)</sup> The living of Offord Cluny was obtained in 1452, and the abbot made his first presentation to M. William Norburne on 24 August, 1452.<sup>(391)</sup> All three churches are mentioned in the Domesday Book under 'Land of Westminster Abbey'.<sup>(392)</sup> Wheathampstead had also been included in the possessions of the abbey. However, early in the thirteenth century a dispute arose among the abbot and convent of

Westminster, the bishop of Lincoln and the rector of Wheat-hampstead. It concerned the rights which the monastery had in the church. The outcome, after arbitration by the bishop of Salisbury and others, was that the monks would be allowed to appropriate half the tithes of the rectory, valued at £20 in 1291, and the bishops of Lincoln should have the right of patronage. (393)

As was shown in an earlier chapter, the abbey and convent were no strangers to disputes. Their appropriation of the church of Ashwell was bitterly opposed by Robert Grosseteste, but it was carried out in 1239. An even earlier dispute concerning the tithes of the demesne at Ashwell between the monks and the rector was settled in 1215 on the following terms: the rector was to have £1 18s.0d. in rents, but he had to find a chaplain to celebrate a daily mass of the Virgin in Ashwell church. (394)

Before its appropriation in 1391, the monks of Westminster possessed a pension of 13s 4d annually in their church of Aldenham. (395) A vicarage was ordained in 1399, as has been shown. Stevenage remained a rectory in the patronage of the abbey until the dissolution. It was one of the (396) livings occupied by Hervey de Borham, made vacant in 1277-8.

Two of the great monastic houses, Thorney abbey and Crowland abbey, both tenth century foundations, held seven and two churches respectively within the archdeaconry. Yaxley was Thorney's most important and populous manor, and the church of Yaxley was valued at £35 6s. 8d. in 1291. (397) The Domesday record shows that, in addition to the church of Yaxley, the abbey also held the churches of Stanground, Woodstone, Haddon, Water Newton, Stibbington and two and a

half hides which are taxable in Sibson. There is also 'a priest and half a church'.<sup>(398)</sup> In 1248 the rectory and vicarage in Yaxley were consolidated.<sup>(399)</sup> Between 19 December 1148 and 1151 Robert Chesney, bishop of Lincoln (1148-1166), in his charter confirmed Newton, Woodston, Yaxley, and its market, Haddon, Stibbington and Stanground.<sup>(400)</sup> The latter had been quitclaimed by Henry de Merch, in the bishop's presence, at Stanground, to the abbot and convent of Thorney. A grant made by abbot Ralph to M. Thomas de Tirenton, his clerk, of Stibbington, provides evidence of a vicarage in the church. The record reads 'saving to M. Roger de Glamesford the vicarage he has held since before Thomas' day and saving the ancient pension of one mark annually to Thorney'.<sup>(402)</sup>

The presentation to the church of All Saints, Huntingdon was shared between Huntingdon priory and Thorney abbey. The abbot (Salmon?) conceded a mediety of the church of All Saints to be paid once a year to the monastery of Thorney 'ad emendationem librorum'.<sup>(403)</sup> Later references, made in abbot Ralph's day, concern a mediety in All Saints church which he had given to Simon de Thalinton, paid annually from a chantry of the church in the form of a pension of ten shillings.<sup>(404)</sup>

Thorney abbey, just like other monastic houses, looked after its own interests, and so presented men who might be of use to them to their churches. Thus, the Norman clerk, Aubrey of Fecamp, who was engaged in the king's wardrobe, held the living of Stanground from 1258 until his death in 1276. He also held Cottingham and Peakirk in the patronage of Peterborough abbey.<sup>(405)</sup> On 27 December 1300 William de Langton, nephew of John de Langton, then chancellor of England,

on the presentation of the abbot and convent of Thorney, was instituted as rector of Stibbington.<sup>(406)</sup> On 20 May, 1300 Thomas of Canterbury, clerk to the king, was instituted to the church of Yaxley.<sup>(407)</sup> These few examples show that the abbey was concerned to maintain contacts with the court.

Crowland abbey was also a very powerful patron, possessing a total of fifty estates by the fourteenth century. Some were manors, other berewicks. In many Crowland perhaps owned only the advowson of the church and the glebe. In others they owned only a few tenements from which rents were drawn.<sup>(408)</sup> The Domesday book shows that Crowland abbey held both the manor and the vill of Morborn with a church and rents only from one and a half hides and six acres in the modest estate of Thurning. No church is mentioned.<sup>(409)</sup>

At the time of the Domesday survey Folksworth was held by Walter Giffard. Between c. 1150 and 27 December 1166 the church of Folksworth was given by Gilbert of Folksworth, Guy his son, and Elias his brother, saving the parsonage of Adam, the clerk. In addition, when Gilbert joined the order as a brother thirty acres of land was also given.<sup>410)</sup> Both Morborn and Folksworth remained as rectories. In 1291 it was recorded that a pension of £1 6s. 8d. was payable from the church of Morborn and a pension of 6s 8d. from Folksworth to the abbey. In 1526 these pensions were still being paid to Crowland abbey.<sup>(411)</sup>

The great abbey of St. Albans held four churches in the archdeaconry: Bramfield, Bygrave (briefly), Letchworth and Wallington, all of which were in Hertfordshire. The Taxatio of 1291 shows that they were valued at £6 13s. 4d., £10, £8 and £8 respectively. Bramfield paid a pension of two



shillings to the abbey; Bygrave paid no pension; Letchworth paid 13s 4d. in pension, and Wallington paid £1. (412)

Bygrave was given to the monks of St.Albans by William de Wedona and assigned with the monks' lands to the use of the kitchen. This was confirmed by the pope Honorius III. in 1218. (413) Yet in 1220 M. Thomas de Windesor' ,clerk, was presented by John de Sumery to the church , made vacant by his own resignation , as he had assumed the belt of knight-hood ( cingulum milicie sollempniter assumpsit ), probably to go on crusade. (414) The right of John de Sumery to present someone in his place is not clear, but successive lords of the manor subsequently presented clerks to the church whenever it became vacant. Letchworth, on the other hand, was given to the abbot and convent of St.Albans by William de Montfitchet and Rohais, his wife and William their son, at the beginning of the twelfth century, and the advowson remained with the abbey until its dissolution. (415)

Wallington was given to the abbey , probably assigned to the abbey kitchen , by William de Wallington. His gifts to the abbey were confirmed by Henry II between the years 1174 and 1182. (416) The process of endowing monasteries with churches continued throughout the fourteenth century. In 1321 the lords of the manor of Caldecote(Herts.), Thomas Chedworth and his brother Robert, conveyed the manor to Adam of Newnham, probably an agent for abbot Hugh and the convent of St.Albans. (417) The royal licence was also given for the acquisition of this manor by the abbey in part fulfilment of the permit to acquire lands and rents to the value of £100 annually. (418) The first recorded presentation of a clerk to the church of Caldecote was made on 7 November 1331 when

M. Richard Sabright, a deacon, was instituted. (419)

In 1344 the patron of Hinxworth (Herts) church alienated the advowson to the abbot and Convent of Pipewell, possibly because the community was so poor. In 1322 the monks had been obliged, because of their poverty, to leave their abbey for a time. (420)

Unlike the convent of Pipewell, the priory of St. Neots appears to have been more wealthy. Among the advowsons held by St. Neots priory were those of Everton, Eynesbury, St. Mary in St. Neots, Ayot St. Peter, Huntingdon St. Clement and Huntingdon, Holy Trinity. (421) In addition two-thirds of the whole tithes of the parish of Waresley were given to the priory before 1132 by Torold Waste. Gilbert and Robert Waste confirmed the grant. (422)

The priory seems to have been singularly unfortunate in retaining their advowsons. Ayot St. Peter was given to the monks c. 1160 by Gilbert de Mountfitchet, and the grant was confirmed by bishop Hugh of Lincoln. (423) Sometime before 1229 the priory lost their right in this church, as the grant was not entered in the St. Neot's cartulary, drawn up then. There are no references to anyone being presented during the thirteenth century, but on 6 July 1326 John son of Nicholas Abel de Flamstead, an acolyte, was instituted on the presentation of John Poleyn. (424) Thereafter presentations were made by lords of the manor.

The right of presentation to Eynesbury church was given to St. Neots priory by Simon de St. Liz, first earl of Huntingdon, during the incumbency of Wilfrid, in William Rufus' reign. This was confirmed to the monks by earl Henry, son

of the king of Scotland.<sup>(425)</sup> The church was appropriated in 1194 on condition that the prior and convent, being situated close to 'the great thoroughfare and celebrated road from London to York, should give meat and drink for the love of God, to all who should ask them'.<sup>(426)</sup>

However, a few years later, Saher de Quincy challenged this right. An agreement was reached in 1204. The monks of Newnham (Beds.) were also involved, as it was agreed that Saher and heirs should have the right of presentation to a mediety of the garb tithes belonging to the church, all the altar offerings and all the land belonging to the church. The other mediety would belong to the monks of St. Neots together with a third part of the garb tithes of the demesne of the village. In the name of that mediety they are to pay each year in perpetuity to the canons of Newnham one hundred shillings.<sup>(427)</sup>

Holy Trinity, Huntingdon was a gift from a Godricus Gusta'r'd (his name is uncertain) sometime during the reign of Stephen (1135-1154). This was confirmed to the priory between 22 July 1123 and 20 February 1148. <sup>(428)</sup> However, it would appear that the prior and convent of Huntingdon had also laid claim to the church, as in 1194 William, prior of Huntingdon, renounced his claim. The prior of St. Neots agreed to pay two marks annually to the prior and convent of Huntingdon. <sup>(429)</sup> This pension was released c.1220 by John, prior of Huntingdon, as Roger de Lovetot agreed to discharge it. <sup>(430)</sup> The church is not mentioned after 1348 when John de Tychemersh was instituted on the presentation of Edward III, as the priory of St. Neots was in his hands because of the war with France. <sup>(431)</sup>

A similar fate befell the church of St.Clement, Huntingdon , which had been given to the priory of St.Neots by William Berenger of Huntingdon, probably during the reign of Henry II(the date is uncertain), but before 1220 when the cartulary was written.<sup>(432)</sup> No mention is made in the episcopal registers after the institution of John Cole of Southwell on 19 July, 1364.<sup>(433)</sup>

Everton, which had been given to the monks of St.Neots by Gilbert ,earl of Pembroke,and confirmed to them by Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury between 1143 and 1148, was appropriated<sup>(434)</sup> to the convent. The date of the latter is uncertain. In 1538 the advowson was in the hands of John and Robert Pawson who presented Nicholas Smyth as perpetual vicar.<sup>(435)</sup>

St.Mary's Church, St.Neots , granted to the prior and convent of St.Neots by Gibert de Mountfichet and Richard his heir, was confirmed to them between 21 September 1186 and 16 November 1200.<sup>(436)</sup> The church was rebuilt c.1507 and the vicar who had seen all the work carried out resigned in 1512. He was succeeded by John Raunds, the last prior of St.Neots, on the presentation of Thomas Lynd. He has to pay the retiring incumbent of St.Mary's, M.John Grene,B.C.L. an annual pension from the fruits of the church .<sup>(437)</sup> John Raunds is described as prior of St.Neots in bishop Atwater's and bishop Longland's visitations of religious houses in 1518, 1520 and 1530, carried out by their chancellors and the vicar general respectively.<sup>(438)</sup> The prior may have realized that the future of the priory was in doubt, hence his appointment to the vicarage of St.Mary. In 1526 his stipend was £20. As he had a curate and three stipendiary priests, it must be assumed that they carried out the work of the parish while he

continued to lead the monks at the priory.<sup>(439)</sup> The priory would have been among the first of the religious houses to be dissolved.

While many of the religious houses featured in the registers of the bishops of Lincoln were large and powerful, a number were small and poor communities, truly pauperes Christi. Hertford priory was a small, poor cell of St. Albans abbey and held only two churches: St. Mary, Hertford, valued at £3 in 1291, and Pirton, valued at £21 6s. 8d., but whose value decreased, as it was worth only £5 6s. 8d. in 1526.<sup>(440)</sup>

In 1218 Richard de Argentein granted the advowson of the chapel of the hospital he had founded in Little Wymondley in Hertfordshire to the chapter of Lincoln.<sup>(441)</sup> The church of Little Wymondley formed part of the endowment of the hospital in that place. The patronage of the church was given on condition that the canons of this modest Augustinian foundation celebrate perpetually masses for the souls of Richard de Argentine, his wife Cassandra and their heirs. In the Valuation of Norwich the church is recorded as being worth five marks.<sup>(442)</sup> It was never a strong unit, and it was stipulated in its charter that the number of brethren should never exceed seven unless the revenues happened to increase.<sup>(443)</sup>

A number of religious houses both outside and inside the diocese of Lincoln held just a single church within the archdeaconry. The early history of the church of Hitchin in Hertfordshire seems to be obscure. The patronage of the church was in the hands of the abbess and convent of Elstow in Bedfordshire. It was thought that the countess Judith, niece of William I, made a grant of the church to the abbey. However, the church is not mentioned in connection with

the abbey of Elstow until the reign of Henry II, who by charter confirmed the lands granted by the countess, and he granted also to them the church of Hitchin.<sup>(444)</sup> Hitchin was a valuable asset to the nuns as the church was worth £40 in 1291.<sup>(445)</sup> Sometime after 1215 a vicarage was ordained in the church by Hugh of Wells by authority of the council. It was to consist of all the altarage of the church, two acres of land in various fields, and a suitable house for the vicar. He was to pay the nuns thirteen marks annually, and to pay synodals. The nuns were to be responsible for providing hospitality for the archdeacon when on visitation. It was also stated that two chaplains were necessary to assist in serving the parish.<sup>(446)</sup> In 1379 there were three chaplains, two clerks and two others described as 'brothers', all of whom served the parish church, the chapel of Great Wymondley and the chapel of Dinsley.<sup>(447)</sup> The cure of souls was thus well provided for within the parish.

Chesterton, in the deanery of Yaxley, was granted to the canons of Royston (Herts.) by Eustace de Merk c.1163. In 1291 the church was worth £12, and a pension of £2 was paid to the priory.<sup>(448)</sup> The tenure of the church by the canons did not pass without being challenged. In 1200-1201 Ralph de Chesterton and Roger de Cantilupe, tenants of the Lovetot fee, claimed the advowson. They failed in their attempt. A later claim made by Roger only also failed, and the priory was left in undisputed possession of the advowson.<sup>(449)</sup>

The church of Bengeo was granted to the monks of St. Saviour's Priory, Bermondsey in 1156 by Reginald de Tony. The grant was confirmed by Henry II in 1159.<sup>(450)</sup> In 1291 the church was valued at £10. The note in the Liber Antiquus

describes the vicarage as having been ordained ex dudum, and consisting of the lesser tithes and offerings of the altar. The vicar bears all ordinary burdens, except hospitality for the archdeacon which the prior holds as his responsibility. The vicar also has to pay one bezant annually to the prior, due from of old. (451)

Reading abbey, like St. Saviour's, Bermondsey, was outside the diocese of Lincoln, but held the advowson of one church, namely, Aston (Herts.). Queen Adeliza made a gift of the manor of Aston with its church on the first anniversary of the death of King Henry I, her late husband, on 1 December 1136. In return the monks were to pray for his soul and hers, and those of Stephen and Mathilda, their family, their parents etc. (452) The Taxatio gives a valuation of £11 6s. 8d. and a pension due from the rector is £1 to the abbey, and an additional portion of tithes, valued at £2 6s. 8d. to the abbey at Colchester. (453)

The monasteries of St. Augustine, Bristol, Stonely, Canons Ashby, St. James, Northampton, Wilsford, Lewes, Walden, Malton, all held a church each within the archdeaconry. Details of these are provided in the appendix.

Monastic patrons exercised a powerful control over many churches not only within the archdeaconry, but throughout the whole Church. It could be argued that they provided poor scholars with an opportunity to finance their studies; but often those left to serve the parishes were poorly paid. On the other hand, as has been shown, a number of good men remained faithfully in their parishes for years. Undoubtedly, religious were often under pressure to provide livings for the sons of their patrons. Those with patronage were open to importunity and sometimes aggression. (454)

Monastic patrons for the most part appear to have presented local men to their benefices. From time to time, they were able to present a graduate, reserving their more lucrative benefices for one. How far the needs of the parish were taken into account is unclear. On the other hand, men from the locality would possibly be more in sympathy with local needs, and possibly more acceptable to parishioners. The prior and convent of Huntingdon presented a number of local men to the church of Hemingford Grey, in their patronage. In 1239 William of Hemingford was presented to the church. He was followed by men from Hardwick, Fenstanton, Raveley, all villages near Hemingford Grey and some of which were in the deanery of St. Neots. The same pattern of local men being appointed to their churches of Hartford, Huntingdon St. Benedict, and Winwick was also followed.

The prior and convent of Huntingdon shared the patronage of Huntingdon, All Saints with the abbot and convent of Thorney. Huntingdon priory continued to present men from the villages near Huntingdon and from the town itself. Thorney abbey chose men from villages near Thorney, such as Catworth, Steeple Gidding and the town of Peterborough. The abbot and convent of Colchester, patrons of Hamerton, sometimes chose men from towns and villages near their abbey of St. John in Colchester. Thus John of Ipswich was presented in 1237, Adam of Colchester in 1317 and Godfrey of Colchester in 1318.

The great abbey of Ramsey also chose men from villages near Ramsey or near the church to which they were presenting clerks. Thus to the church of Steeple Gidding, in their patronage, men from Ramsey, Sawtry, Nassington, Wood Newton were presented. Men from Glatton, Felmersham, Huntingdon, and



Overton were presented to their church of Wistow. (455)

Other monastic patrons such as Missenden, St. Neots, Peterborough, Thorney etc. presented men from villages which were near their houses or churches. From time to time the monastic patrons allowed or were coerced into allowing others to present clerks to their churches. Thus, on 15 January 1495, Robert Arnold of the vill of St. Neots presented Richard Oliver to the church of St. Mary, in St. Neots and in the patronage of the prior and convent of St. Neots. (456) On Robert's death in 1505, the convent resumed their rights of presentation, and presented M. John Grene, B.C.L. (457) However, in 1512 a layman, Thomas Lynd, presented to the church, on a grant from the priory. Unusually, the prior himself, John Raundes, was presented to the church. (458)

On 2 September 1507 Nicholas Both was instituted to the church of Southoe, in the patronage of the prior and convent of Huntingdon, on the presentation of Nicholas Pakenham, a citizen of London, described as 'our beloved in Christ'. (459) An earlier presentation had been made to the church of All Saints, Huntingdon, also in the patronage of the priory, by John Spencer, on a grant from the prior, made on 1 September 1496. Hugh Bulkley was instituted on 8 April, 1497. (460)

The advowson to Stibbington church, in the patronage of Thorney abbey, was granted for one occasion only to Anne Semark and her second husband, David Phillip, who presented Christopher Fisher to the church on 17 November 1496. (461) In 1501 and 1507 the abbot presented to the church, but in 1537 Sir John Russell and Isomena, his wife, presented a clerk to the church. (462) These are just a few instances among many of presentations being suspended.

While monastic communities provided for the cure of souls by presenting secular clerks to their benefices, they regarded them as pieces of property. It was taken for granted by those who donated churches to monasteries that the monks would enjoy the greater part of the fruits of those churches. At first being content to receive a pension from a church, religious communities found that they needed more. Thus, appropriations were allowed and vicars appointed. As fifteenth-and sixteenth-century episcopal visitations records show, churches were frequently neglected and allowed to fall into decay. Too much of the fruits was often being taken from a church which could not afford to provide for itself, an incumbent and a monastery. While monastic patronage had much to commend it, the appropriation of churches could be regarded as a dark spot on their record.

#### **Papal Patronage**

The majority of those presented to livings relied on the lay patrons, the monasteries and clerical corporations or the crown for preferment, but a certain number, comparatively few, were provided to a living in the archdeaconry by the pope himself. The right of the pope to provide for clerks in his employ was enforced from the end of the twelfth century by legal sanctions.

The evidence for papal provisions in England before the death of Innocent III in 1216 is various and not always easy to assess. Sometimes the pope would request a benefice, not always specified, for an individual clerk. For instance, in a letter, written between 1175 and 1181, by Alexander III to Geoffrey, bishop elect of Lincoln, reference was made to S. archdeacon of Northampton, who had resigned his prebend in

the cathedral , so that the bishop-elect might confer it  
(463)  
upon the pope's nephew Gentilius. Persons are also found  
holding benefices at the order of the pope: for example,  
Peter de Colonna was made a canon of Lincoln and prebendary  
of Decem Librarum 'at the instance and petition' of pope  
Innocent III between 1203 and December 1205. (464)

So far as may be judged , in the absence of bishops'  
registers before 1217 and chancery enrolments before 1199,  
there was no widespread resentment concerning papal nominees  
before the thirteenth century. The practice exercised by  
twelfth-century popes of recommending clerks for benefices  
was transformed by the beginning of the thirteenth century  
into a papal right to confer benefices directly. This was  
often done directly or by others on apostolic authority  
without the agreement and even against the wishes and inter-  
ventions of ordinary patrons . (465) This papal right was  
justified on the theory that 'omnes ecclesie et res eccles-  
iarum sunt in potestate'. (466)

The Calendar of papal letters provides an indication of  
the extent of papal beneficence at the expense of the patrons.  
Provisions in forma pauperum were made to assist poor clerks  
in their studies and careers, but these were not always re-  
corded. (467) In his famous decretal Licet ecclesiarum of  
27 August 1265, after setting forth for the first time in  
theory the right to dispose of all ecclesiastical benefices,  
Clement IV claimed an exclusive authority over one particular  
class, namely those benefices vacated in the Roman curia.  
These the pope alone could legitimately bestow: they were  
reserved to the disposition of the Holy See. Thus to the  
theory of provision was added the theory of reservation, as

Barraclough says, 'a theory capable of unlimited expansion'.

While there are many instances of the pope's familia or their relatives being preferred to churches in the diocese, the first reference to a papal provision in the archdeaconry occurred in the episcopate of Robert Grosseteste (1235- 53) when G. Delisle ( de Insula ), subdean and chaplain of Gregory IX, was instituted by proxy to Alwalton, in the patronage of Peterborough abbey, on 8 July 1240. (469)

Grosseteste's attitude to papal provisions was a part of his whole attitude to patronage. He had no hesitation in rejecting presentations to benefices, if those who were presented lacked the qualifications which he regarded as being necessary for the cure of souls, whoever were the patrons, whether laymen, his own friends, monastic bodies, the king, papal officials, or even the Pope himself. 'In his efforts to secure this adequate cure of souls he had to face both the abuses of patronage and the need to defend the Church against aggression from civil authorities, and the abuses in the exercise of papal provisions, a right which in its proper use he was prepared to accept as involved in the plenitude of power'. (470)

In his letter to Cardinal Otto in 1238 Grosseteste had expressed his feelings in the matter. He recognized the papal power to dispose freely of all benefices, but pointed out that the abuse of that power builds for the fires of hell. To confer benefices without first obtaining the assent of the patrons could only lead to scandal. (471) These misgivings about papal provisions and the abuse of them by papal agents provoked him to protest in 1250 at the Council of Lyons. (472) Matthew Paris said that Grosseteste 'hated like poison

the dishonest Romans who had the pope's precept for obtaining a provision. He was in the habit of saying that if he were to hand the cure of souls over to them he would be acting Satan's part. Consequently, he often threw away letters sealed with the papal bulls, and acted directly in contravention to such commands'.<sup>(473)</sup> Despite the somewhat exaggerated language of Matthew Paris, the remark about the cure of souls echoes Grosseteste's thought.

Although only ten presentations to livings were made as a result of papal mandates during Grosseteste's episcopate, other presentations by monastic houses may have been due to papal requests which tended to be treated as papal commands. This may have been true of Gravesend's episcopate, as there is only one direct reference to a papal privilege, but several references to members of the papal household being presented to benefices by religious houses, while others exhibited a papal privilege to possess more than one church with cure of souls. Thus, M. John de Agnanis, a papal chaplain, was instituted to Stibbington on 6 February 1266, on the presentation of Thorney abbey.<sup>(474)</sup> All other presentations under a papal mandate were made to benefices outside the archdeaconry.

Oliver Sutton (1280-99), Gravesend's successor, held clear views on papal provisions, just like his illustrious predecessor, Grosseteste. He was quite ready to obey the papal mandate of Boniface VIII, who had provided John de Colonna to a prebend in Lincoln cathedral, but asked if it was advisable, in view of the sentence of deprivation published against members of the Colonna family and of excommunication of their supporters. The bishop took the opportunity to complain of the harm done to the church of Lincoln by

provided canons who farmed their benefices.<sup>(475)</sup> Papal provisions were doing no good to the church of Lincoln. There is some truth in Sutton's remarks as between 1267 and 1300 twelve prebends in Lincoln cathedral were held by papal provisors, and three were held in succession by foreigners, provided by the pope.<sup>(476)</sup>

Provisions often aroused strong opposition both from patrons and parishioners, as well as from the incumbents whom they sometimes sought to replace. Professor Southern has outlined some of the problems brought about by papal provisions. First, 'the pope could not have any reliable knowledge of the suitability of more than a tiny proportion of the beneficiaries of his grants'. Again, 'the final effect of the limitless increase in the number of clerks with claims to benefices on papal authority was to make more room for the exercise of those local secular influences which it had been the main object of papal policy to resist'.<sup>(477)</sup>

While it is true that dignities and prebends in cathedral chapters and collegiate churches were affected by papal provisions, and in some chapters the proportion of alien provisors was high, this was not true of the parishes. W.A. Pantin asserts that the practical effect of papal provisions on the cure of souls seems to have been much exaggerated. A large proportion of these benefices were in lay patronage, and so not touched by papal provision. Those benefices which were in the gift of ecclesiastical patrons, especially the richer ones, were frequently given to non-resident pluralists, such as civil servants. It was therefore a question of whether the non-resident incumbent would be a royal nominee or a papal provisor. A papal provisor might himself be a royal servant.<sup>(478)</sup>

The number of aliens holding parochial benefices in England seems to have been small. In the archdeaconry between the years 1209 and 1340 twenty-one foreigners were presented to livings. Mainly Italian - Among them was John de Agnania, papal chaplain, presented by the abbot and convent of Thorney to Stibbington on 6 February 1266.<sup>(479)</sup> There is no evidence that any of those presented were papal provisors, but influence could have been brought to bear on monastic patrons to present a papal nominee to a living.

In the second half of the fourteenth century the government itself dealt with the problem of papal provisions by passing a series of acts with the sole purpose of limiting papal authority in England. The first of these was the Statute of Provisors, promulgated in 1351, which declared invalid all papal provisions to English benefices. With the Statute of Provisors Edward III claimed for himself the right to present to any benefice in ecclesiastical patronage of which he was patron paramount and which, when it became vacant, was reserved or provided to by the pope.<sup>(480)</sup>

Despite the act, papal provisions continued in England as elsewhere. The statute may have lessened their number but it did not stop their arrival. William of Waltham was provided to the church of Somersham, in the patronage of the bishop of Ely, by Boniface IX, on the grounds that Adam, cardinal priest of St. Cecilia's, formerly rector of Somersham, had died in Rome. The church was reserved to the pope in accordance with his late reservation of benefices so void. William of Waltham was undoubtedly a pluralist, as he held the parish church of Algakirk, and canonries and prebends in the monasteries of the Benedictine nuns of Wilton, York,

London, and Salisbury, value altogether not exceeding 480 marks, together with two benefices with cure or otherwise incompatible, by papal dispensation. He may change them as often as it seemed good to him for two similar or dissimilar benefices. The provision was made on 19 September 1398.<sup>(481)</sup>

In 1411 John XXIII endeavoured to provide a member of his household and one of his secretaries with the prebend and canonry of Leighton Bromswold, void by the death of John Hawberk, D.Cn. & C.L., at the apostolic see.<sup>(482)</sup> There is no record of John Bremor's (clerk so provided) being installed as a canon, although he appears on the list of prebendaries. M. Francis Uguccione D.Cn. & C.L., cardinal priest of Ss. Quattuor Coronati, received a royal grant to the canonry and prebend of Leighton Manor on 10 November 1411 and he was<sup>(483)</sup> duly collated 20 November 1411 and installed on 30 November. Bremor also had a reservation of the archdeaconry of Northampton, but did not obtain it.<sup>(484)</sup>

In 1438 the pope's wishes were ignored. In a letter to William Alnwick, bishop of Lincoln (1437-1449), Eugenius IV said that he had received his letters of excuse for not assigning, in accordance with the pope's letters, the canonry and prebend of Sutton (cum Buckingham) to Peter Barbo, his nephew, and an apostolic notary, having alleged a penal statute of the realm. However, the canonry and prebend had been made void in curia, and so were automatically in the pope's gift. The pope pointed out that the bishop was bound to obey the papal mandate, the more so that the king's secretary, Thomas Bekynton (archdeacon of Buckingham from 1424 by royal grant) could then receive the canonry and prebend which the pope had in mind for him, also made void by the



death in Rome of M. Robert Sutton, a papal chamberlain. In the event, Peter Barbo, who tried to enter the prebend on 28 September 1438 on the strength of his provision, failed. Nicholas Dixon was installed on 2 August, on the bishop's mandate, and remained until his death in 1448. M. Thomas Beckington (Bekynton) also did not, in return, obtain the papal provision to the prebend of Langford Manor. He remained as archdeacon of Buckingham until his election as bishop of Bath and Wells in 1443.<sup>(486)</sup> Although popes were effectively excluded from influencing English patronage they retained a nominal involvement which was exploited to secure bishoprics for royal candidates. Papal influence was not completely abolished as the pope's authority was needed to grant dispensations affecting an individual's qualifications to hold benefices- such as age or illegitimacy.

#### Patronage and Conflict

The exercise of patronage was frequently marred by disputes and quarrels. While monastic records are full of accounts of the generosity of lay lords who freely donated both lands and churches to their favourite monastic order, such generosity did not always go unchallenged. Patrons' rights were jealously guarded, and before any presentation to a living could be made, an inquiry or inquest de iure was held.<sup>(487)</sup> On the receipt of litterae presentationis the bishop issued a mandate to the archdeacon or to his official or to the rural dean, to whom it was occasionally delegated. In pursuance of the bishop's mandate, the rural chapter was summoned to the church where the inquest would be held. Due notice was given so that all interested parties were informed. Frequently the suitability of the clerk to be presented might be inquired into, as well as the presentation.

The articles de iure patronatus covered every aspect of the presentation:

- 1 whether it was void.
- 2 since what date.
- 3 how, namely by death or resignation.
- 4 who had the right of patronage.
- 5 what was the annual value of the church.
- 6 whether the church is in dispute.
- 7 whether pensions or other rights existed in the church.

Where the suitability of the clerk was inquired into on the same occasion the following questions were asked:

- 1 whether he was of age and free.
- 2 whether he was legitimate.
- 3 whether he had led a praiseworthy life.
- 4 whether he was sufficiently literate.
- 5 whether he was free of ill repute.
- 6 whether he was beneficed elsewhere. (488)

If there was no opposition to the presentation, then the bishop was informed that the benefice was vacant and not litigious, and the presentee was given custody, pending his admission and institution. Where a dispute arose the claims of the rival parties were investigated and the bishop was informed that the church 'litigiosa est' or 'non est sine lite'.

Some claimants settled their disputes amicably out of court. In 1232 the abbot and convent of Crowland quitclaimed the advowson to Caldecote church in exchange for lands in Hulseby. (489) Others availed themselves of the right to have their cases heard in the curia regis, since under the terms of the Constitutions of Clarendon of 1164 all disputes concerning presentations to churches and questions of advowsons

were to be decided in the KIng's Court. (490)

Frequently the disputes were about darrein presentment (de ultima presentatione). This meant that if a church was vacant the person who last presented, or his heir, was entitled to present a clerk to that church. If any person conceived that he had a better right, then he must bring his action and recover the advowson, but until he has done this it is for the person who last presented to the living, or his heir, to present again.

Evidence of such a right to present to a living would be provided either by a grant or by a charter or in the episcopal letters of institution. Mention of a charter was made in a dispute between Thomas de Pavilly and Roger his brother and the prior of Evermue over the advowson of Willian church in 1239. They recovered their right to present in the king's court. (491)

Some parishes seemed to suffer from litigiousness: in 1223 Vitalis of Grafham (Hunts.) recovered his right of presentation to the church of Grafham in the king's court against the claims of a number of people per assisam ultime presentationis. (492) However, in 1316 the bishop (Dalderdby) collated the church to a local man, William of Grafham, because the rights of presentation had been disputed by John Engayne and Elena, his wife, against Vitalis of Grafham, a descendant of the earlier Vitalis, for more than six months. A few months later the king's writ was issued stating that John Engayne and his wife had recovered their right of presentation. (493)

An example of an heir endeavouring to regain an advowson from a monastic community may be seen at Abbotsley (Hunts.)

The advowson had been given to the abbey of Jedburgh by Gervase and Ralph Ridel c.1138. In 1272 there was a lawsuit between the abbey and John Ridel who endeavoured unsuccessfully to recover the advowson.<sup>(494)</sup> During the Scottish wars the right of presentation was forfeited to the king. On the conclusion of peace in 1328 the abbey petitioned for the restoration of the advowson, but they were unsuccessful.<sup>(495)</sup> However, the rector was ordered in 1328 to pay the abbot the pension due from the church, while the king retained the advowson, which he gave to Sir William Felton who gave it to Balliol College, Oxford in 1340.<sup>(496)</sup> The abbey then surrendered the pension of three marks which had formerly been paid to it by the rector.<sup>(497)</sup>

Plenary or occupancy of a living afforded no protection in a dispute, when the crown challenged it. If the king's precursors had not filled a vacancy in a parish when they could, the king retained the right to nominate. Edward III therefore could nominate to benefices vacated during the reign of Edward I, recovering his rights against those 'usurpers' who had got in first.<sup>(498)</sup> For instance, Houghton, which was in the gift of Ramsey abbey, was in dispute in 1345 when Edward III presented his clerk, Richard de Scarle, to the living on the grounds that Ramsey abbey had been void in the time of Edward I.<sup>(499)</sup> Roger de Maners of Stamford, who had obtained a papal provision to the benefice in 1344, procured an annulment of the king's presentation.<sup>(500)</sup> Ultimately, the king's Court of Common Pleas upheld the claims of Richard de Scarle, but the abbot saved his right of presentation for the future.<sup>(501)</sup>

Occasionally disputes led to violence. The advowson of Southoe in Huntingdonshire had been given to the priory of

Huntingdon by Elias de Amundeville, who died in 1231. This gift was confirmed by his brother and heir. Nigel, and again in 1255 by John de Littlebury and his wife, Margaret and Roger de Lovetot.<sup>(502)</sup> During a vacancy in the priory in 1358 John de Clipstone endeavoured to reclaim the advowson, but he was unsuccessful.<sup>(503)</sup>

In 1377 the priory received a licence to appropriate<sup>(504)</sup> the church of Southoe and its dependent chapel of Hail Weston. However, this was not welcomed by the incumbent, John Tubbe, so the prior undertook in 1381 to pay him a generous pension of thirty-five marks until another rectory had been obtained for him.<sup>(505)</sup> In the same year the prior complained that he and his fellow canon, William Hemingford, and his servants had been assaulted and besieged by John Tubbe and others in his home and close at Southoe Lovetot.<sup>(506)</sup> However, the appropriation was confirmed in 1381 and again in 1462.<sup>(507)</sup>

Some patrons were successful in their lawsuits on one occasion but unsuccessful on another. In August 1377 Nicholas fitz Simond of Bishop's Hatfield won his right to present his own clerk to the church of Graveley (Herts.).<sup>(508)</sup> In 1385 he was again in the King's Court, defending his right to present a clerk, Ralph Wadman, to Graveley church. On this occasion, his right was contested by Nicola fitz Simond, the former wife of Edmund fitz Simond, kt. She won the right to present on this occasion. Accordingly, on 26 June 1385 Thomas Nichol of Stevenage was instituted.<sup>(509)</sup> However, Thomas did not remain at Graveley for a long ministry, as on 10 October 1386 he exchanged his living for that of Weston.<sup>(510)</sup>

Not all disputes were concerned with advowsons: many settlements were made with regard to lands and tithes. St.

Neots cartulary records that William Brito had surrendered into the bishop's hands(Robert Chesney 1148-1166)and restored to the church of St.Neots twelve acres of land,which Muriel had previously given to them in elemosinam. The said William had done violence to the church a long time before(diu ante violentiam predictae ecclesie intulerat). (511)

A dispute concerning tithes was resolved when, in 1129, Robert, archdeacon of Northampton, received a mandate from the bishop(Alexander 1123-1148) directing him to reseise the abbot of Thorney of the tithes of Roger of Stibbington, and to 'take right'(cape rectum) against the chaplain of 'Bermfeld' who is detaining them, if the abbot was in possession at the time of William de Lisures' death. In addition, the archdeacon was instructed to cause the parishioners of Wansford in Northamptonshire to attend Stibbington church, which was nearby in Huntingdonshire. Apparently this had been agreed before the bishop and archdeacon Henry of Huntingdon. The archdeacon had to forbid Henry the priest to receive them at Wanford or their offerings, and he had also to restore what he had received. (512)

On 18 August 1291 Oliver Sutton (1280 -1299) issued a mandate to the dean of Berkhamstead and William rector of Langley to collect the garb tithes from the parish of St. Peter's, Berkhamstead, put them in the barn of John Rede the rector, and sequesterate them carefully. They have to warn and if necessary excommunicate anyone who opposed the proceedings, and to report to the bishop. This sequestration had been made necessary by a quarrel between John of Rede on the one hand and the servants of the earl of Cornwall and the parishioners of St. Peter's on the other, in the course of

which the rector had been prevented from collecting his tithes. (513)

Occasionally restitution had to be made for tithes which had been wrongfully taken. Stephen Munden, the rector St. Andrew's church, Huntingdon, being uncertain of his parish boundaries, had received tithes from the church of St. Peter, Huntingdon, which was appropriated to the prioress and convent of St. James, Hinchbrook in Huntingdon. Thomas Brouns, D.C.L. was called in to arbitrate in the dispute between the priory and Stephen Munden. In the presence of witnesses the bishop (Philip Repington 1405- 1419) gave judgement in favour of the priory, and the exact boundaries of the parish were defined. The rector of St. Andrew's was required to make good the loss sustained by the priory. (514) Judgement was given at the bishop's manor of Sleaford on 8 May 1415.

These are just a few examples of the many disputes concerning patronage and tithes which occurred throughout the archdeaconry.

### **The Effects of Patronage**

To be a patron was to be someone with a great responsibility, although how many saw it as such it would be difficult, if not impossible, to assess. Thirteenth-century bishops took their responsibilities very seriously when appointing men to parishes. Patrons who attempted to present illiterate relatives to parishes often found their presentees rejected. The numbers of those presented to churches within the following centuries who were illiterate certainly declined, or were not noted, as few references are made in the bishops' registers. For the most part a bishop could do little more

than assent to the candidates presented to him by the various patrons in the diocese.

As has been shown, many churches in the archdeaconry were in the hands of the religious orders, so they had a decisive control of the parish churches. They could present devoted pastors who were lovers of souls to their benefices, or those who were ambitious, for whom a benefice was but a stepping stone to greater things. Undoubtedly a number of parishes benefited from long-serving incumbents. These were usually vicars who had to reside, whose patronage was in the hands of monastic houses. Others whose patronage was in the hands of laymen, lords of the manor, who occupied rectories, often remained for a number of years in their parishes. These were men such as John de Hamilton, rector of Orton Waterville, in the patronage of Robert de Waterville, Kt, who was appointed in 1326 and died in 1344, or William Patrick, appointed in 1377 and who died in 1398 in the same parish. (515) Other examples of long-serving vicars and rectors have already been provided.

Others used their benefices as a means of obtaining a stipend, and were appointed by patrons who knew that they often already had received a benefice. Such men were frequently in the king's service, so it could be argued that patrons were providing a service both for the state and the church. The negative side was that other worthy men were deprived of benefices, and remained as assistants.

Lay patrons had the power to reserve churches in their patronage for members of their families. Colleges too, like families, tended to present their own members where possible.



Thus, in 1485 Henry Snell of Clare Hall, Cambridge, was presented to the living of Great Gransden, in the patronage of the college.<sup>(516)</sup> The treasurer of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, M. William Smyth, was presented by his college to Orton Waterville, of which they had become patrons, in 1500.<sup>(517)</sup> Most of the men presented to college livings were graduates, and where they were resident in their parishes surely the parishioners would have benefited.

Many patrons, both lay and clerical, provided a number of men to benefices about whom we know little or nothing. Those who remained for longer than the average incumbency of a few years, and who were not always moving from one cure to the next by exchange, would probably have had the greatest influence on their people. At least they would have come to know their parishioners, and possibly have become effective pastors in the cura animarum.

# Notes on Patronage and Patrons

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- 4 Ibid. 17; B.R.Kemp, 'Monastic Possessions of Parish Churches in England in the Twelfth Century', J.E.H., 31(1980), 134-6.
- 5 C.R.Cheney, From Becket to Langton (Manchester, 1963), 122-3; W.A.Pantin, The English Church In The Fourteenth Century ( Cambridge, 1955), 35.
- 6 W.A.Pantin, The English Church , 31.
- 7 Ibid. 31, 32.
- 8 Cart. Mon. de Rameseia , I, 397; The Valuation of Norwich ed.W.E.Lunt(Oxford, 1926), fo.51<sup>r</sup>.
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- 10 Rotuli Litterarum Patentium ( 3 vols. Rec.Comm.1835, H.M.S.O., 1901-3), I, 790; Cal.Rot. Chartarum 1199-1216 (Rec.Comm., 1837), 175a.
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- 12 Grosseteste , 262, 274.
- 13 Domesday Book, Huntingdonshire ed.J.Morris (Chichester, 1975), 17. 18; D.Matthew, The Norman Monasteries and Their English Possessions ( Oxford, 1962), 13-14.
- 14 Grosseteste, 299.
- 15 Sutton , VIII.88, VII.89.
- 16 Ibid. VIII. 89.
- 17 F.Cheyette, 'Kings, Courts, Cures and Sinecures', Traditio, xix (1963), 297.
- 18 Grosseteste , 274, 285, 513; H.de W. III, 45; Gravesend, 173.
- 19 Ibid. 285, 513 (Henry de Lexington's episcopate).
- 20 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. II.fos. 231<sup>v</sup>, 240<sup>v</sup> (bis.), 249<sup>r</sup>, 250<sup>r</sup>.

- 251<sup>v</sup>·, 253<sup>v</sup>·, 254<sup>v</sup>·, 255<sup>r</sup>·, 255<sup>v</sup>·; IV.fos.364<sup>v</sup>·, 366<sup>r</sup>·, 366<sup>v</sup>·  
(bis), 367<sup>v</sup>·
- 21 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.II.fo.240<sup>v</sup>·
- 22 Ibid.fos.255<sup>r</sup>·, 255<sup>v</sup>·; Reg.IV.fo.366<sup>r</sup>·
- 23 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.II.fo.251<sup>v</sup>·
- 24 Ibid. fo.253<sup>r</sup>·.
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Episc. Reg. X.fos.284<sup>v</sup>·, 285<sup>r</sup>·, 287<sup>r</sup>·, 289<sup>v</sup>·\*, 294<sup>r</sup>·, 304<sup>v</sup>·  
(exchange), 304<sup>v</sup>·, 306<sup>r</sup>· (exchange), 308<sup>v</sup>·\*, 311<sup>r</sup>·, 317<sup>v</sup>·\*  
(exchange). Folios marked\* refer to the king's presenting  
to churches in his right as Duke of Lancaster.
- 29 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. VI.fo.108<sup>v</sup>· (Huntingdon, St.Clement);  
Reg. IX.fos.382<sup>r</sup>· (Holy Trinity, Huntingdon), fo.383<sup>v</sup>·  
(St.Neot's), fo.385<sup>r</sup>· (Everton).
- 30 L.A.O. Episc.Reg. VI. fo.107<sup>v</sup>·
- 31 C.P.R. 1340 - 43, 499.
- 32 C.P.R. 1381-5, 447; C.P.R. 1385-9, 154; V.C.H.Herts.  
II. 176.
- 33 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. X. fo.306<sup>v</sup>·
- 34 Ibid.IV.fo.380<sup>r</sup>· (bis).
- 35 Ibid.IX. fo.390<sup>r</sup>·; C.P.R. 1348-50, 510.
- 36 Ibid.IX.fo.383<sup>v</sup>·
- 37 Ibid.IX. fos.384<sup>r</sup>·, 384<sup>v</sup>·
- 38 Ibid.IX. fo.420<sup>v</sup>·; C.P.R.1348-50, 359.
- 39 Ibid.IX. fo.412<sup>r</sup>·; John le Neve, Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541, I Lincoln Diocese, comp. H.P.King (I.H.R. 1962), 41.
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- 44 C.P.R.1364-7, 93.
- 45 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.X.fo.292<sup>v</sup>.; C.P.R. 1367-70, 112.
- 46 Ibid.IV.fo.375<sup>v</sup>.
- 47 Ibid.fo.384<sup>r</sup>.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Ibid.X.fo.318<sup>r</sup>.
- 50 Ibid.fo.332<sup>r</sup>.;Reg.XI. fos. 246<sup>v</sup>.,249<sup>r</sup>.,251<sup>v</sup>.
- 51 Ibid.X.fo.333<sup>v</sup>.; Reg.XI. fos.241<sup>v</sup>.,247<sup>r</sup>.,248<sup>r</sup>.,270<sup>v</sup>.
- 52 Ibid. XI. fo.244<sup>v</sup>.
- 53 Ibid.fo.267<sup>v</sup>.
- 54 Ibid. fo.267<sup>v</sup>.
- 55 Ibid. fos. 237<sup>r</sup>.,259<sup>r</sup>.
- 56 Ibid. fo.289<sup>r</sup>.
- 57 Cheyette, 'Kings,Courts,Cures and Sinecures', 303.
- 58 Ibid. 303.
- 59 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XIII.fo.269<sup>v</sup>.
- 60 Ibid. XIV.fo.328<sup>v</sup>.
- 61 Repingdon, Memoranda, I, 37.
- 62 Ibid. 112
- 63 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XIV.fo.328<sup>v</sup>.; D.B.Hunts. 8,2.
- 64 Ibid. fo.275<sup>v</sup>.
- 65 Ibid.XIII.fos.268<sup>r</sup>.,269<sup>r</sup>. (Essendon),268<sup>r</sup>.(Baldock).
- 66 Ibid.XVI.fos.106<sup>v</sup>.,XIV.fo.356<sup>v</sup>,359<sup>v</sup>,364<sup>r</sup>.,  
XVIII.fos.165<sup>r</sup>,
- 67 Ibid. XVI.fo.111<sup>v</sup>.
- 68 Ibid. fos.113<sup>v</sup>.,115<sup>r</sup>.; XVII.fos.76<sup>r</sup>.,77<sup>r</sup>.,80<sup>v</sup>.,81<sup>r</sup>.;  
XVIII.fos.165<sup>r</sup>.,167<sup>r</sup>.,168<sup>r</sup>.;XX. fos. 298<sup>v</sup>., 301<sup>r</sup>.,303<sup>r</sup>.,  
305<sup>r</sup>., 305<sup>v</sup>.

- 69 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XIII. fo.115<sup>r</sup>.
- 70 Ibid. XX. fo.303<sup>r</sup>.
- 71 Ibid. XVI.fo.113<sup>v</sup>;XVIII.fo.167<sup>r</sup>; XX.fos.300<sup>r</sup>,301<sup>r</sup>,  
305<sup>v</sup>.
- 72 Ibid. XX. fo.300<sup>r</sup>.
- 73 Ibid. fo.301<sup>r</sup>.
- 74 Ibid. fo.305<sup>v</sup>.
- 75 Ibid. XVII. fos. 76<sup>r</sup>,77<sup>r</sup>.
- 76 Ibid. fo.81<sup>r</sup>.
- 77 D.B.Hunts. 29,1; Rot.Hund. ii. 635.
- 78 C.P.R.1446-52,84; V.C.H.Hunts, III, 227; Cambs. and  
Hunts. Archaeol. Soc. Trans. iii, 266.
- 79 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XX. fo.308<sup>r</sup>.
- 80 Ibid. XXI.fo.110<sup>v</sup>.
- 81 Ibid.fo 111<sup>r</sup>.
- 82 Ibid.XXII.fo.254<sup>r</sup>.
- 83 Ibid. XXI.fo.117<sup>r</sup>.
- 84 Ibid. XXII.fo.254<sup>r</sup>.
- 85 Ibid. fos. 255<sup>v</sup>.(bis),257<sup>v</sup>,259<sup>r</sup>,262<sup>v</sup>.(bis),263<sup>r-v</sup>,  
XXIII.fos.356<sup>v</sup>,358<sup>r</sup>,361<sup>r</sup>,364<sup>r-v</sup>,366<sup>v</sup>,367<sup>r</sup>,368<sup>v</sup>,  
373<sup>r</sup>.
- 86 Ibid.XXII.fo.255<sup>v</sup>.(Baldock),fo.261<sup>r</sup>.(Radwell exch.),262<sup>v</sup>.
- 87 Ibid. fo.255<sup>v</sup>. He was presented in November,1485.The  
exact date is not known as there is a blank space in the  
manuscript.
- 88 Ibid. XXIII,fo.358<sup>r</sup>.M.John Toullard was admitted to  
Hatfield on 11 January 1500 in the person of Henry Davies  
a literate,his proctor.
- 89 Ibid. XXII.fo.262<sup>v</sup>.(Flamstead chantry); XXIII.fos.364<sup>r-v</sup>;  
366<sup>v</sup>.
- 90 Ibid. XXIII. fo.367<sup>r</sup>; B.R.U.O. ii,956.
- 91 Ibid. 373<sup>r</sup>.

- 92 L.A.O.Episc. Reg.XXIII fos.379<sup>r</sup>.,382<sup>r</sup>.(bis), XXIV.fos.56<sup>v</sup>.  
58<sup>r</sup>.,58<sup>v</sup>.,59<sup>v</sup>.; XXVII.fos.234<sup>r</sup>.,236<sup>v</sup>.,244<sup>v</sup>.,245<sup>r</sup>.,245<sup>v</sup>.,  
246<sup>v</sup>.(bis),247<sup>r</sup>.,248<sup>r</sup>.,249<sup>v</sup>., 250<sup>v</sup>.,251<sup>v</sup>.(bis),252<sup>r</sup>.,  
252<sup>v</sup>.(bis),253<sup>r</sup>.( four occasions),254<sup>r</sup> .
- 93 Statutes of the Realm 1278- 1714 , ed. A.Luders et al.  
( 9 vols. Rec.Comm. 1810- 28),III.575-8.
- 94 P.R.O.,Exchequer, Augmentations Office, Treasurers Accs.  
(E 323), 1,pt.i,m.4d. A list of fines paid for the  
exemption of religious houses from the Act of Dissolution  
of 1536.
- 95 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII. fo.246<sup>v</sup>..
- 96 Ibid. fo.246<sup>v</sup>.
- 97 Ibid. fos.249<sup>v</sup>.,250<sup>v</sup>.; Valor. IV.27b.
- 98 Ibid. fos.248<sup>r</sup>., 253<sup>r</sup>..
- 99 Ibid. fo.250<sup>v</sup>..
- 100 Ibid. 251<sup>v</sup>., 253<sup>r</sup>.. Dates are 15 May,1545; 8 April,1546.
- 101 Ibid. 252<sup>v</sup>., 254<sup>r</sup>..
- 102 Ibid. fo.252<sup>v</sup>..
- 103 Ibid. fo.253<sup>r</sup>..
- 104 Ibid. fo.247<sup>r</sup>..
- 105 Ibid. XXIII. fo. 382<sup>r</sup>..
- 106 Ibid. XXVII. fo.236<sup>v</sup>..
- 107 Ibid. fo.245<sup>v</sup>..
- 108 Gravesend.181.
- 109 Ibid. 183.
- 110 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.II.fo.247<sup>v</sup>..
- 111 Ibid. XXIII.fo.360<sup>v</sup>..
- 112 Ibid. XXVII.fo.234<sup>r</sup>..
- 113 Ibid. XXV.fo.58<sup>v</sup>.; XXVII.fo.232<sup>r</sup>.
- 114 Ibid. XXVII. fo.236<sup>r</sup>..
- 115 Ibid. fo.240<sup>v</sup>..
- 116 Ibid. fo.232<sup>r</sup>..

- 117 J.K.McConica, English Humanists and Reformation Politics ( Oxford, 1965), 128.
- 118 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII. fo.238<sup>r</sup>.
- 119 C.P.R. 1413-16, 199; Repingdon ,Memoranda , III,149, no.282.
- 120 C.P.R. 1452- 61 , 477.
- 121 C.P.R.1452- 77, 6.
- 122 G.W.O.Addleshaw, The Development of the Parochial System , 13.
- 123 M.Brett,The English Church Under Henry I (Oxford,1975), 127; Councils and Synods , I.pt.II, 676, C.17, Ne ecclesia sacretur donec provideantur necessaria et presbytero et ecclesie .
- 124 Ibid. 676, C. 16, Ne nove capelle fiant sine consensu episcopi.
- 125 Brett, The English Church , 128.
- 126 H.de W., I,Intro. vi-vii; 19-20.
- 127 Grosseteste, Epistolae , ed.H.R.Luard (R.S. 1861) 228, Ep.72; J.H.Srawley,'Grosseteste's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln',Robert Grosseteste Scholar and Bishop ,ed. D.A.Callus (Oxford,1969), 157 -158.
- 128 Grosseteste, Epistolae , 50 - 54,ep. 11.
- 129 R.W.Southern, Robert Grosseteste (Oxford,1988),267.
- 130 C.R.Cheney, From Becket to Langton (Manchester,1965), 157.
- 131 H.de W.,I,67.
- 132 Ibid. III,37.
- 133 Gravesend, 184.
- 134 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IV. fo.367<sup>r</sup>.
- 135 Ibid. fo.389<sup>r</sup>.
- 136 Ibid. fo. 390<sup>v</sup>.
- 137 C.P.R. 1350-54, 363: C.P.R. 1354- 58 , 157; C.P.R. 1391-96, 221.
- 138 C.P.R. 1391-96, 518.

- 139 Grosseteste, 283.
- 140 Gravesend, 186.
- 141 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XIV.fo.368<sup>r</sup>.
- 142 Ibid. XXV.fo.56<sup>r</sup>; XXVII. fo.237<sup>v</sup>.
- 143 C.P.R.1377-81, 80 ; C.P.R. 1381-85 , 37, 51.
- 144 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XIII.fo.354<sup>r</sup>.
- 145 Ibid. XXVII. fo. 235<sup>v</sup>. Aston manor and church had been a gift made to Reading Abbey by Queen Adeliza in December 1136. Reading Abbey Cartulary , ed.B.R.Kemp (2 vols. Camden Fourth Series 31) I. 301-302.
- 146 Grosseteste, 291.
- 147 Ibid. 293.
- 148 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.IV. fo.367<sup>r</sup>.
- 149 Monasticon. VI, 441; Rot. Orig. Abbrev. i.163; Inq. a q. d. 2 Edward II, file 74,no.9; C.P.R. 1307-13
- 150 H.de W. I. 44.
- 151 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. II. fo.242<sup>r</sup>.
- 152 H.de W. I. 44,49(per lapsus); 127(bis),128(bis),164, III. 48.
- 153 Ibid. I. 49.
- 154 Ibid. passim; Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066 - 1300 III. Lincoln comp. D.E.Greenway ( I.H.R.London,1977), 83.
- 155 H.de W. I.127.
- 156 Grosseteste .300.
- 157 Gravesend. 176; Fasti ,1066-1300, 139.
- 158 Ibid. 187.
- 159 Sutton,VIII.74,205; Fasti 1066-1300,53.
- 160 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. II. fo.243<sup>v</sup>.(William de Thurlby), fo.248<sup>v</sup>.(Henry de Luttergarstate),242<sup>r</sup>.(J.Hardredshall), fo.240<sup>r</sup>.(M.Ralph de Lacu).
- 161 Ibid. fo.231<sup>r</sup>.



- 162 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.II. fos.248<sup>v</sup>.-249<sup>r</sup>.
- 163 Ibid. fo.249<sup>v</sup>.
- 164 Ibid.IV.fo.362<sup>v</sup>.
- 165 Ibid.fo.404<sup>r</sup>; C.P.R. 1327-30, 368.
- 166 C.P.R.1327-30,378; C.P.L. II. 316.
- 167 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.IV.fos.362<sup>v</sup>,375<sup>v</sup>,377<sup>r</sup>.
- 168 Ibid. fo.382<sup>v</sup>.
- 169 Ibid.IX.fos.384<sup>v</sup>,406<sup>r</sup>,413<sup>r</sup> (Stilton),fo.414<sup>r</sup>.  
(Puttenham).
- 170 Ibid.fos.393<sup>r</sup>,396<sup>r</sup>.
- 171 Ibid. X.fos.293<sup>r</sup>,XI. fos.274<sup>v</sup>,285<sup>r</sup>.
- 172 Ibid. fos.287<sup>r</sup>,312<sup>r</sup>,312<sup>v</sup>; XI.fos. 250<sup>v</sup>,265<sup>r</sup>.
- 173 Ibid. XI. fos.434<sup>r</sup>,435<sup>r</sup>,437<sup>v</sup> (bis); Fasti ,1300-1541,  
1.,45,51,67,89.
- 174 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XIII. fos.265<sup>v</sup> (bis).
- 175 Ibid.XIV.fo.338<sup>v</sup>. Repingdon, I. 67-68.
- 176 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XIII. fo.335<sup>r</sup>; C.P.R.1399-1401,484.  
Fasti 1300- 1541, 32.
- 177 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XIV.fo.361<sup>r</sup>.
- 178 Ibid. XVII. fo.77<sup>r</sup>, XVIII.fo.164<sup>v</sup>.
- 179 Ibid.XVIII.fo.170<sup>r</sup>.
- 180 Ibid.XX.fos.302<sup>r</sup>,303<sup>v</sup> (Little Berkhamstead),fo.313<sup>v</sup>.  
(Throcking),fo.313<sup>v</sup>.
- 181 Ibid.XXII.fo.254<sup>r</sup> (Keston),259<sup>r</sup> (Broadfield),fo.263<sup>r</sup>.  
(Caldecot).
- 182 Ibid.fo.252<sup>r</sup>.
- 183 Fasti.1300-1541 ,47, 115; L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXIII.fo.19<sup>v</sup>.
- 184 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXII.fos.253<sup>r</sup>,277<sup>v</sup>.
- 185 Ibid. XXIII fo.19<sup>v</sup>,16<sup>r</sup>,22<sup>r-v</sup>; Fasti 1300 - 1541,  
9,14,92,100.
- 186 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXII.fo.256<sup>r</sup>.
- 187 Ibid.XXIII.fo.360<sup>v</sup>.

- 188 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXIII.fo.366<sup>r</sup>.
- 189 Fasti 1300-1541, 4.
- 190 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXIII.fo.377<sup>r</sup>, fo.27; Fasti 1300-1541  
112.
- 191 Ibid.XXIII.fo.374<sup>v</sup>.
- 192 Ibid.XXV.fo.58<sup>v</sup>.
- 193 Ibid.XXVII.fos.232<sup>v</sup>, 235<sup>r</sup>, 235<sup>v</sup>.
- 194 Ibid. fos. 4, 5<sup>v</sup>; Fasti 1300-1541, 52, 59,  
Chapter Acts of the Cathedral Church of St.Mary of  
Lincoln 1520-1559, ed.R.E.G.Cole (3 vols.L.R.S.  
1915-20), 47, 76,
- 195 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXVII. fos.5, 6; Fasti 1300-1541, 102, 8.  
Chapter Acts, 76, 61.
- 196 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXVII. fo.239<sup>r</sup>.
- 197 Ibid. fos.243<sup>r</sup>, 246<sup>r</sup>.
- 198 Ibid. fo.246<sup>r</sup>; Fasti 1300-1541, 57, Chapter Acts, 19.
- 199 Ibid. fos.13, 16<sup>v</sup>.
- 200 The Poll Tax returns for 1379 and 1381 and the Subsidy  
rolls for 1526 show that both Puttenham and Wheathamp-  
stead had only assistant clergy, apart from the rectors.  
Clerical Poll Taxes of the Diocese of Lincoln 1377-1381  
ed.A.K.McHardy(L.R.S.81, 1992), 86 no.1046, 96, no.1133  
(Puttenham); 87 no.1052, 96 no.1139; A Subsidy Coll-  
ected in the Diocese of Lincoln in 1526 ed.H.Salter  
( O.H.S., 1909), 172, 173.
- 201 Early Charters of St.Paul's Cathedral, ed.M.Gibbs  
(Camden Third Series LVIII, 1939), 68, no.94. A further  
gift in alms to the monastery was made between 1141-2,  
69, no.95.
- 202 Ibid. 74-5, no.101.
- 203 Sutton VIII, 75-77.
- 204 Visitations of Churches Belonging to St.Paul's Cathed-  
ral in 1297 and 1458, ed.W.Sparrow Simpson(Camden New  
Series 55, 1895), 49-50.
- 205 Ibid.101-102.
- 206 Early Charters, St.Paul's, 229, no.289.

- 207 Gravesend, 171.
- 208 Visitation 102; Early Charters, St. Paul's, 177, no. 223.
- 209 Ibid. 48-49.
- 210 Ibid. 102-3.
- 211 R.A.L. III, 148-197.
- 212 Ibid. 153, add. chart. 804.
- 213 Ibid. 167-8, add. chart. 825.
- 214 Ibid. 174-5, add ch. 941.
- 215 Ibid. 175, add. chart. 834. 835.
- 216 The Valuation of Norwich, ed. W.E. Lunt (Oxford, 1926), 294.
- 217 Taxatio, 36b.
- 218 Ibid. 42; Valor Ecclesiasticus. ( 6 vols. Rec. Comm., 1825-34), IV. 263.
- 219 Gravesend, 183; Sutton VIII, 86.
- 220 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. XXV. fo. 57<sup>r</sup>.
- 221 Ibid. XXVII. fo. 231<sup>v</sup>. (M. Christopher Massingberd, 31 Oct. 1521); fo. 233<sup>v</sup>. (M. John Dawson, 2 May, 1524), fo. 240<sup>v</sup>. (M. Henry Cokke, B. in Decrees, 14 July, 1528).
- 222 Linc. Cath. MS D ii, 86. i, 2, 4; C.P.R. 1307-13, 207.
- 223 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. IV. fo. 387<sup>v</sup>.; R.A.L. III, 391 ch. 990.
- 224 Fasti 1066-1300 Lincoln, Intro. xi-xii.; R.A.L. I. 53, no. 179.
- 225 D.B. Hunts. 1, 8. (Land of the King); R.A.L. I. 89 no. 140; 112 no. 179.
- 226 R.A.L., I. 193, no. 250 (Confirmation by pope Eugenius III of various possessions of the church of Lincoln, dated 13 April, 1149.); 202, no. 254 ( Confirmation by pope Alexander III, 6 June , 1163)
- 227 Gravesend, 185.
- 228 R.A.L. I. 197, no. 252 (Confirmation by pope Eugenius III, addressed to the canons of Lincoln, in which the possessions of the prebends are distinguished from those of the common. Dated 6 February, 1146). 204, no. 255 (A Similar confirmation was made by pope Alexander III on 5 June, 1163.).

- 229 Gravesend, 183-4.
- 230 R.A.L. I. 199, no.251, ecclesiam de Lectona in Huntedunesira cum pertinenciis suis . 204-209,no.255.  
Confirmation of prebendal possessions by pope Alexander III.
- 231 Grosseteste ,295,296.
- 232 Gravesend,169.
- 233 Liber Eliensis, 249-250, 6.Carta regis Henrici quomodo abbatiam de Ely in episcopatum transmutavit ; R.A.L. I, 191, no.249. Espaldeswic quod manerium datum fuit Lincolnensi ecclesie in recompensatione Cuiusdam partis sue parrochie que uocatur Cantebrug-esiram modo est Helyensis episcopatus.
- 234 R.A.L. I , 199, no.252, 207, no.255.
- 235 Valuation , 278.
- 236 Grosseteste ,296; Gravesend , 170.
- 237 Fasti, 1066- 1300 III. 99,43, 38, 11 ;Gravesend 5,157; R.A.L. II , 159, no.456; VIII ,106, no.2296.
- 238 L.A.O. Episc.Reg.XIII. fo.269<sup>r</sup>.
- 239 Ibid.XVI.fo.105<sup>r</sup>.
- 240 Ibid.XX. fo.304<sup>r</sup>;XVI. fo.105<sup>r</sup>.
- 241 Ibid.fo.304<sup>r</sup>.
- 242 Ibid.XXII.fo.251<sup>r</sup>;XXIII.fo.364<sup>v</sup>.
- 243 Rot. Hund.II. 685; C.P.R. 1247-58, 660, 661.
- 244 Gravesend,188-189.
- 245 Earldom of Gloucester Charters ,ed.R.B.Patterson(Oxford, 1973) 44, no.22.
- 246 Ibid 49, no.22.
- 247 C.P.R 1292-1301 , 140.
- 248 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.IV.fo.378<sup>v</sup>.
- 249 C.P.R. 1345- 48, 135.
- 250 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.IX. fos. 400<sup>v</sup>,401<sup>r</sup>.
- 251 B.L.Add.MS.24792.

- 252 C.P.R.1350-55, 309.
- 253 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.X.fo.314<sup>r</sup>.
- 254 F. of F. Hunts, case 94, file 83, no.18.
- 255 C.P.R.1476-85, 232.
- 256 Subsidy, 180.
- 257 C.P.R.1338-40, 461
- 258 C.P.L. 1342-62, 69; L.A.O.Episc.Reg.IX.fo.410<sup>v</sup>.
- 259 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.X.fo.332<sup>v</sup>, XVI.fo.116<sup>v</sup>,XX.fos.309<sup>r</sup>,  
311<sup>r</sup>,315<sup>r</sup>, XXI.fos.118<sup>r</sup>,120<sup>v</sup>,120<sup>v</sup>,XXIII.fo.361<sup>v</sup>,  
XXV.fo.58<sup>r</sup>,XXVII. fos.248<sup>v</sup>,249<sup>v</sup>.
- 260 Ibid.X.fo.332<sup>v</sup>, XVI.fo.116<sup>v</sup>.
- 261 Ibid. XVI.fo.116<sup>v</sup>,XX.fo.311<sup>r</sup>.
- 262 Ibid.XXI.fo.120<sup>v</sup>,XXIII.fo.361<sup>v</sup>.
- 263 Ibid.XXIII.fo.361<sup>v</sup>,XXV. fo.58<sup>r</sup>.
- 264 Ibid. XXV.fo.58<sup>r</sup>,XXVII.fo.248<sup>v</sup>.
- 265 Taxatio, 35 (bis), 37(bis).
- 266 Grosseteste, 274.
- 267 Gravesend, xxv, 175,176.
- 268 Sutton VIII ,78,90.
- 269 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IX. fo.385<sup>v</sup>.
- 270 Ibid. XX.fo.306<sup>v</sup>,XXII.fos.251<sup>r</sup>,261<sup>v</sup>,XXVII.fo.236<sup>r</sup>.
- 271 Ibid.XIV.fo.370<sup>v</sup>, XVI.fo.104<sup>v</sup>.
- 272 Ibid.XX. fos.299<sup>v</sup>,305<sup>r</sup>,311<sup>r</sup>,XXI.fo.113<sup>r</sup>,XXII.  
fo.258<sup>r</sup>, XXIII.fo.12<sup>r</sup>.
- 273 Ibid. II.fos.238<sup>v</sup>,246<sup>v</sup>,249<sup>r</sup>,253<sup>v</sup>.IV.fo.363<sup>r</sup>.
- 274 Ibid.IV.fo.366<sup>r</sup>.
- 275 C.R.R. III, 24-25
- 276 Ibid. XIII,1227-30, 314.
- 277 C.Ch.R.1226-1257 , 223.
- 278 C.P.R.1350-54, 363; C.P.R. 1354-58 , 157.
- 279 C.P.R.1391-96,227,518.

- 280 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XX.fo.299<sup>r</sup>.,XXI.fo.122<sup>r</sup>..
- 281 Ibid.XXVII.fo.235<sup>r</sup>..
- 282 Valor IV. 263.
- 283 Colin Platt, The Parish Churches of Medieval England ( London,1981), 9; D.Knowles, The Monastic Order In England (Cambridge,1976), 597.
- 284 B.R.Kemp, 'Monastic Possessions',J.E.H 31,133-135; G.W. O.Addleshaw, Rectors,Vicars and Patrons. 17-18.
- 285 The Early Charters of Waltham Abbey 1062-1230, ed.R. Ransford (Woodbridge,1989), 209, no.311.
- 286 C.U.L. Add.MSS. 3020.3021 (Red Book of Thorney),fos. 150<sup>v</sup>.,421<sup>r</sup>..
- 287 Councils and Synods  
C. and S.I Pt.II(1066-1204), 677, C.22.
- 288 B.R.Kemp, 'Monastic Possessions',J.E.H.31., 138, quoting from The Letters and Charters of Gilbert Foliot, ed. A.Morey & C.N.L.Brooke (Cambridge,1967),355.
- 289 The Cartulary of Missenden Abbey, ed. J.G.Jenkins ( 3 vols. Bucks.Archaeol. Soc.,1938),III. 193, no.827.
- 290 Ibid. III.174,no.797.
- 291 Ibid.III.174, no.798.
- 292 C.R.Cheney, From Becket to Langton, 125.
- 293 Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Johannis Baptiste de Colecestria, ed. S.A.Moore( 2 vols. Roxburgh Club, 1879),i.122-3.
- 294 BL.MS.Cotton Cleop.C vii.fos.202<sup>v</sup>.- 203<sup>r</sup>..
- 295 Grosseteste.270. In 1240 William de Chetesley was instituted on the resignation of Dom. Willelmi, capellani domine Regine . i.e. Eleanor of Provence, queen consort of Henry III. The date of this institution is c.1240.
- 296 Liber Antiquus passim ; R.A.R.Hartridge, A History of Vicarages in the Middle Ages(Cambridge,1930)5i,n.5. Cheney, From Becket to Langton ,132-133.
- 297 Liber Antiquus,27-29. The churches were Alconbury, Pirton,Weston,Kimpton,Sandon,Bengeo.

- 298 Chron.Rames. 132-133. The bishop's confirmation reads:  
Volumus itaque ut eleemosinarius Rames., quisquis  
fuerit, ejusdem ecclesiae personatum obtineat et  
tanquam persona omnibus rebus illius ecclesiae pro  
voluntate sua disponat.
- 299 Grosseteste , 252, 253-4.
- 300 Robert Grosseteste, Scholar and Bishop , App. 209-10.  
F.S.Stevenson, Robert Grosseteste Bishop of Lincoln  
 (London, 1899), 285-289.
- 301 C.P.L. I. 181; Grosseteste, 277-282.
- 302 Grosseteste, 278
- 303 Annales Monastici IV. 132-133.
- 304 Gravesend, 171.
- 305 Ibid. 180; R.A.L. III. 175. no.834 and 835. The  
 bishop's grant to the dean and chapter of the  
 advowson of the church of Great Paxton was made on  
 19 December 1273.
- 306 Gravesend , 184.
- 307 Ibid. 185.
- 308 C.Ch.R. II, 208.. Strangely, there is no record of this  
 in the Hailes manuscripts. The gift must have been  
 withdrawn ,as future references show the House of  
 Ashridge as patrons.
- 309 Gravesend, 235
- 310 Ibid. 187-188.
- 311 Cheney, From Becket to Langton, App.III, 190,191,  
B.L.MS.Egerton 3033, fo.51<sup>r</sup>.
- 312 P.R.O. Anc.Deed B. 2967.
- 313 English Historical Documents , ed.D.C.Douglas  
 (12 vols. London, 1955-77), III, 1189-1327, ed. H.  
 Rothwell, 658-9.
- 314 Hartridge, Hist. of Vicarages , 21.
- 315 Liber Antiquus , 26.
- 316 Ibid. 28.

- 317 H.de W. I. 193. I have used some of the material  
 318 Ibid.III, 40 -41,42.from my M.Phil thesis here,pp 80-1.
- 319 Liber Antiquus,29. The entry for St.John's, Hertford  
 reads: et in toto pane altaris .
- 320 Wilkins, Concilia, I. 587.
- 321 Liber Antiquus. 26.
- 322 H.de W. I.193.
- 323 Grosseteste ,510-511.
- 324 Gravesend, 315 a note to be added concerning the entry  
 on page 167 regarding the poverty of Bengoe church.
- 325 Gravesend,180.
- 326 Sutton,VIII.75-77.
- 327 H.de W. I. 138.
- 328 Sutton, I. 54-58.
- 329 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.IV. fo.387<sup>V</sup>.; Linc.Cath. MS,Dii,86.
- 330 Ibid. XII. fo.315; C.P.R.1377-81, 242.,C.P.R.1381-85,  
 37.
- 331 Ibid.XII. fo.381; C.P.L. 1362-1404, 430- 431.
- 332 W.A.M. Reg.Bk. ii,279: B.Harvey,Westminster Abbey and  
 Its Estates In The Middle Ages (Oxford,1977),App.III.  
 403.
- 333 Valor IV. 276.
- 334 C.P.R.1391-6 , P.R.O. Early Chancery Proceedings,  
 bundle 11,no.177, C.P.R. 1399-1401 , 58.
- 335 C.P.R. 1399-1401
- 336 C.P.R. 1385-1391, 64
- 337 C.P.R. 1391-96, 373.
- 338 C.P.R. 1399-1401, 58.
- 339 Gravesend , 177
- 340 C.P.R. 1317-1321,136,322.
- 341 Rolls of Parliament II. 398b.; C.P.R. 1338-40,61.
- 342 C.P.P. I. 175



- 343 Cart. Missenden, III. 190-195, nos. 820, 821, 825, 827.
- 344 Ibid. 189, no. 819.
- 345 Cart. Mon. Rames. II. 136.
- 346 Grosseteste. 260-261.
- 347 Rot. Hund. II. 681-2.
- 348 C.P.R. 1381-85. 37.
- 349 C.P.R. 1391-96. 410
- 350 B.L.MS. Cotton Faust. C.1. fo. 18<sup>b</sup>.
- 351 C.P.R. 1381-85. 343
- 352 B.L.MS. Cotton Faust. C.1. fos. 23<sup>b</sup>, 24.
- 353 C.P.R. 1364-67, 227, 297.
- 354 C.P.L. V. 16.
- 355 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. X. fo. 321<sup>r</sup>.
- 356 Ibid. X fos. 325<sup>v</sup>; XI. 266<sup>r</sup>.
- 357 Cart. Mon. Rames. no. cclxi. Churches were Bury, Hemingford (Abbots), Sawtry, Little Stukeley, Warboys, Slepe St. Ives, Houghton with its chapel of Witton, Ellington with its chapel of Walton, Gidding, Ripton, Broughton, Elton, Therfield, Holywell, Huntingdon St. Andrew with its soke of the town.
- 358 Chron. Rames. 261
- 359 H. de W. III. 52.
- 360 C.C.R. 1392-96, 255-6; Sutton VIII. 224.
- 361 Cart. Mon. Rames. II. 144.
- 362 W.M. Noble, 'Incumbents of the County of Huntingdon'. (Trans. of the Cambs. & Hunts. Archaeol. Soc.) II. 167, n. 2.
- 363 Taxatio IV. 36.
- 364 Ibid. 35-36.
- 365 Gravesend, xii, xxvi, 182.
- 366 Ibid. xxiv, 168; C.P.L. i, 366.
- 367 Ibid. 183.

- 368 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. IX. fo.411<sup>v</sup>.
- 369 Ibid. fos.413<sup>r</sup>- 413<sup>v</sup>.
- 370 Ibid.X. fos.287<sup>r</sup>- 288<sup>r</sup>.
- 371 Ibid.XXI. fos.117<sup>r</sup>(bis); Fasti 1300-1541 III.82.
- 372 Fasti 1300-1541 III. 51.
- 373 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXVII. fo.234<sup>v</sup>; B.R.U.O 1501-1540,  
359.
- 374 Foxe. Acts and Monuments viii.(Index)., B.R.U.O 1501-1540  
360.
- 375 Valuation . fos. 53,54.
- 376 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. II. fo.245<sup>v</sup> .
- 377 Valuation. 294.
- 378 H.de W. II, 189.
- 379 Liber Antiquus.27.
- 380 Taxatio 36.
- 381 D.B.Hunts. 1,6 ; Rot.Hund. II, 633.
- 382 Liber Antiquus . 27.
- 383 R.A.L. I. 241-5, Add.Ch. no.284. The copies of papal  
bulls have disappeared from the Merton priory cartulary  
(B.L. Cotton MSS Cleopatra C.VII), and the present  
text preserves the only surviving copy of this bull.
- 384 Ibid.; Rot.Hund. II. 591 ; Alfred Heales, Records of  
Merton Priory (Oxford,1898), xlii.
- 385 R.A.L. I 241-5, Add.Ch. no.284.
- 386 B.L.MS. Cotton Cleop. C vii. fos.202<sup>v</sup>- 203<sup>r</sup>.
- 387 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. II. fo. 245<sup>r</sup>; IX. fo.364<sup>v</sup>.
- 388 Ibid. XX. fos.305<sup>v</sup>,314<sup>r</sup>; XXII. fos.252<sup>r</sup>,252<sup>v</sup>, 261<sup>v</sup>.
- 389 Subsidy. 188
- 390 Taxatio, . 36,37.
- 391 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XX.fo.298<sup>r</sup>.
- 392 D.B.Herts. 9,10; 9,4; 9,5.
- 393 V.C.H.Herts. II. 312-313;Taxatio,36b.; C.P.L. I.92.

- 394 W.A.M.Bk.iii,14-15; B.Harvey, West.Abbey Estates,404.
- 395 Taxatio. 13b.;C.P.L.IV,430-431.
- 396 Gravesend. 183.
- 397 D.B.Hunts. 7,1. Yaxley,15 hides taxable and land  
for 20 ploughs. A church and a priest are mentioned.
- 398 Ibid.7,2,3,4,5,6,7.
- 399 Grosseteste. 295.
- 400 C.U.L.MS.Add.3020(Red Book of Thorney)fos.170<sup>r</sup>.-v.  
no.xvi.
- 401 Ibid.fos.150<sup>v</sup>.-151<sup>r</sup>.no.lxii. A note of Henry's  
quitclaim was also made on fo.421.
- 402 Ibid.fo.426<sup>v</sup>.(de Gestis Abbatum).I am grateful to  
Dr.S.Raban for this reference.
- 403 Ibid. fo.422<sup>v</sup>.
- 404 Ibid.fo.426<sup>v</sup>.
- 405 Gravesend. xxvi,167,182;107,128. The latter  
reference is to Aubrey of Fecamp's death in 1275.
- 406 R.B.T.fo.449<sup>v</sup>;L.A.O.Episc.Reg.II.fo.449<sup>v</sup>.
- 407 L.A.O.Episc.Reg II.fo.231<sup>v</sup>; R.B.T.fo.449<sup>v</sup>.
- 408 F.M.Page,The Estates of Crowland Abbey (Cambridge,  
1934),ch.ii.,9-10.
- 409 D.B.Hunts. 5,2. Wrest Park Cart. fo.196 (30).
- 410 W.P.C. fo.200<sup>r</sup>,no.i.
- 411 Taxatio ,36; Subsidy.181.
- 412 Ibid.37.
- 413 Monasticon. II,229,233.
- 414 H.de W. III, 34-35.
- 415 Monasticon. II,229,232.
- 416 B.L.MS.Cotton Nero Dvii.fo95,i;Monasticon.II,229.
- 417 B.L.MS.Cotton Otho,D iii.fo.140 et seq.;Gesta  
Abbatum,II.121;III,93;add.ch.19959.
- 418 C.P.R. 1317-21,563.

- 419 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IV. fo.375<sup>v</sup>.
- 420 C.P.R. 1343 -45, 198, 243; Monasticon V. 433.
- 421 B.L.MS.Cotton Faust.A iv. fo.37<sup>a</sup>, 67<sup>b</sup>. 72. 78.
- 422 Ibid.fo.90a; G.C.Gorham,The History and Antiquities of Eynesbury and St.Neots in Huntingdonshire and of St. Neots in Cornwall ( 2 vols. London,1824), I, cxx,301.
- 423 B.L.MS.Cotton Faust.A iv.fo.37<sup>r</sup>,no.1.
- 424 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IV. fo.368<sup>r</sup>.
- 425 B.L.MS.Cotton Faust. A iv.fo. 67<sup>b</sup>,48<sup>a</sup>. Gorham,Hist. of Eynesbury and St.Neots. I. 74,108-120.
- 426 Ibid. I. 108ff.
- 427 B.L.MS. Cotton Faust. A iv.fo.43<sup>a-b</sup>,no.xliii ; Cartulary of Newnham Priory , J.Gober (Beds,H.R.S. 43, 1963-4), no.93.
- 428 B.L. MS. Cotton Faust. A iv.no. xxix.
- 429 Ibid. fo.42.
- 430 Ibid. no.78.
- 431 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IX.fo.382<sup>r</sup>.
- 432 Gorham, Hist. of Eynesbury and St.Neots. II.cxix.
- 433 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. X.fo.284<sup>v</sup>.
- 434 B.L.MS. Cotton Faust. A iv.fo.38<sup>b</sup>, no.xi., fo.39<sup>a</sup>.  
This gift of Everton was confirmed by Bishop Chesney between 19 December 1148 and 27 December 1166.
- 435 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII. fo.246<sup>r</sup>.
- 436 B.L.MS. Cotton Faust. A iv. fo.37<sup>a</sup>.
- 437 Gorham, Hist. of Eynesbury and St.Neots . I. 147;  
L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXIII. fo. 381<sup>r</sup>.
- 438 Visitation In The Diocese of Lincoln 1517-1531 , A.H. Thompson( 3 vols. L.R.S. 33,35,37, 1940, 1944, 1947), III. 94-97.
- 439 Subsidy. 186.
- 440 Taxatio. 36; Subsidy. 176.
- 441 B.M. Quarterly X, 1935-36, 95-98; B.L.MS.Add.MS. 43972; R.A.L. III. 142-146.nos. 792,793,794.

- 442 Valuation. fo.51<sup>v</sup>.
- 443 R.A.L. III.144,no.794. Ita quod non admittantur  
ibidem canonici ultra septenarium numerum nisi forte  
pia deuotione seu largitione fidelium eiusdem loci in  
futurum excreuerint ....
- 444 V.C.H.Herts. III. 17; Monasticon. III. 413.
- 445 Taxatio. 36.
- 446 H.de W. I. 191; III. 35-36; Liber Antiquus. 28.
- 447 Clerical Poll Taxes, ed. A.K.McHardy , 88.
- 448 Monasticon . VI. 405; Taxatio . 35.
- 449 Abbrev. Placit. 31, 38; Rot. Hund. II. 656.
- 450 Monasticon. V. 89; B.M. Harl.MS. 231, fo.18,42;  
Annales Monasticae . III. 439.
- 451 Taxatio.37; Liber Antiquus. 29.
- 452 Reading Abbey Cart. 301-302.
- 453 Taxatio . 37, 37a.; C.Ch.R. 1226-57. 424.
- 454 Swanson, Church and Society , 69.
- 455 All the details of the parishes cited have been obtained from W.Noble's list of incumbents of the county of Huntingdon in the Transactions of the Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Archaeological Society and checked with the bishops' registers for the diocese of Lincoln.
- 456 L.A.O. Episc.Reg. XXIII. fo.12<sup>v</sup>. ( Vacancy in see.)
- 457 Ibid. fo.370<sup>r</sup>. M.J.Grene was admitted on 22 October 1505.
- 458 Ibid. fo. 381<sup>v</sup>.
- 459 Ibid. fo.376<sup>r</sup>.
- 460 Ibid. fo.353<sup>v</sup>-354<sup>r</sup>.
- 461 Ibid. fo.352<sup>v</sup>- 353<sup>r</sup>.
- 462 Ibid. fo.361<sup>v</sup>,374<sup>v</sup>.
- 463 Papal Decretals Relating to the Diocese of Lincoln in  
The Twelfth Century ed. W.Holtzmann, E.W.Kemp(L.R.S.  
47, 1954), 51. Fasti 1066-1300 .III. 117,122-3.

- 464 R.A.L. II.41-2, add. ch. 350.
- 465 G.B.Barraclough, Papal Provisions (Oxford,1935), ch.ii. 8ff.
- 466 Ibid.
- 467 Swanson, Church and Society. 12.
- 468 Barraclough, Papal Provisions , 9.
- 469 Grosseteste. 268.
- 470 Robert Grosseteste Scholar and Bishop , 158-9.
- 471 Grosseteste, Epistolae. 49.
- 472 F.M.Powicke, King Henry III and The Lord Edward  
( 2 vols. Oxford, 1947), I. 283- 286.
- 473 Chronica Majora V. 257.
- 474 Gravesend. 172.
- 475 Sutton. III. Intro. lxxx- lxxxi, VI. 62-63.
- 476 Fasti 1066-1300 . 15,26,29,41.49,57,64-5,69,71,82,95, 97,104. Peter of Savoy(Langdon Manor, 1293),William de Estiniaco (Corringham,1289),John de Colonna(Leighton Manor,1294), Boniface of Saluzzo(Gretton,1299),M.Percival (Fieschi) de Lavania(Aylesbury,1267),M.William de Brescia (Buckden,before 1301), John de Anibaldis(Cropredy,1297),Pandulph de Sabello(Farndon,1287), John de Colonna son of Landulf(Leighton Manor,1297),Richard de Anibaldis de Urbe (Milton Manor,1300),M.Andrew de Candulphis(Scamblesby,1292),James de Colonna ,Stoke before 1288),Amadeus of Savoy(Thorngate, 1295)Cinthius de Pinea de Urbe (Farndon-cum-Balderton,1285).
- The prebend of Copredy received three papal provisions in succession: M.Adenulf dei Conti of Anagni (1236-1289), Odo de Colonna (1297, deprived by pope), John de Anibaldis (1297- 1305). c.f. 64, list 32.
- 477 R.W.Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages(Pelican Hist. of the Church, 1976),2,158, 163.
- 478 W.A.Pantin, The English Church In The Fourteenth Century(Cambridge,1955),58-59.

- 479 Gravesend. 172.
- 480 F.Cheyette, 'Kings, Courts, Cures and Sinecures', 321.
- 481 C.P.L. V. 79.
- 482 C.P.L. VI 251. Leighton Bromswold was the church attached to the bishop's manor from before 1072.
- 483 Fasti. 1300-1541, III. 84.
- 484 Ibid. 11.
- 485 C.P.L. VIII. 266.
- 486 Fasti 1300 - 1541, III. 114, 77, 16.
- 487 J.W.Gray, 'The Ius Praesentandi in England from the Constitution of Clarendon to Bracton'. E.H.R. cclxv, (1952), 492.
- 488 Ibid. App.2, 509; C.D.W. M.Phil. Thesis, 36-38.
- 489 Feet of Fines, Hunts. case 92, file 6, no.81.
- 490 Stubbs' Select Charters, ed. H.W.C.Davis, (Oxford, repr.1960), 164, cap.i. De advocacione et praesentatione ecclesiarum si controversia emergerit inter laicos, et clericos, vel inter clericos, in curia domini regis tractetur vel terminetur.
- 491 C.R.R. XVI, 851 ; E.E.A.I. Lincoln, 200, no.324.; Grosseteste.268-269.
- 492 H.de W. III. 42-3.
- 493 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. II. fos. 250<sup>r</sup>.-250<sup>v</sup>.(bis).
- 494 V.C.H.Hunts.II. 259; Gravesend. 177 and n. on 318.
- 495 C.P.R. 1317-21. 136, 322.; V.C.H.Hunts. II. 259F.
- 496 C.P.R. 1338- 40. 337, 461.
- 497 H.M.C.R. IV. 448
- 498 Swanson, Church and Society . 73.
- 499 C.P.R. 1343-45. 561
- 500 C.P.L. III. 108.
- 501 C.P.R. 1345-48. 43.46, 160, 532.
- 502 B.M.MS. Cotton Faust. C 1.fos.18<sup>b</sup>., 19, 19<sup>b</sup>..

- 503 de Banco Roll, Trinity 32, Edward III, m.193.  
504 C.P.R.1381-5, 343.  
505 B.L.MS. Cotton Faust. C.1. fo.23<sup>b</sup>.  
506 C.P.R. 1381-85, 82>  
507 C.P.R. 1461-67, 156.  
508 L.A.O. Episc.Reg. X. fo. 316<sup>v</sup>.  
509 Ibid. XI. fos. 249<sup>r-v</sup>.  
510 Ibid. fo.252<sup>r</sup>.  
511 B.L. MS.Cotton Faust.A IV. fo.37<sup>v</sup>, no.iiii.  
512 C.U.L. MS. Add. 3021 fos. 409<sup>v</sup>-410<sup>r</sup>.no.v. Bromfeld  
has not been identified.  
513 Sutton III. 149-50.  
514 Repingdon III. 110-114.  
515 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IV. fo.367<sup>v</sup>(bis); VI. fo.109<sup>v</sup>;  
X. fo.314<sup>v</sup>.  
516 B.R.U.C. 538.; L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXII. fo.255<sup>v</sup>.  
517 Ibid. 537.; L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXIII. fo. 357<sup>v</sup>.



## The Clergy

The clergy who served in the Huntingdon archdeaconry were no better and no worse than any of the clergy who served the Church in the Middle Ages. Clerical life was seen not only as a vocation, requiring knowledge and self-discipline, but as a career, offering freedom, status and fortune. However, it was for many an opportunity to serve faithfully as a parish priest. They were a mixed bag of men, ranging from the lowly clericus to the fully ordained presbyter. The lowest degree was the first tonsure, which could be given to boys or youths.

The term clericus is used in the early registers of the thirteenth century loosely of men in minor orders. The lowest of the minor orders was that of doorkeeper(ostiarus) whose duty it was to ring the bell, to open the church and to hold the book at Mass. In token of his office, at his ordination he was handed a key. The second of the minor orders was that of reader or lector. His task was to turn the pages for the preacher, to sing the lessons distinctly. As a sign of his office he received the book from which he was to read from the bishop.

This order was followed by that of exorcist who in addition to abjuring demons also had the task of organizing the communicant parishioners and pouring water for the celebrant; he received a book of exorcisms. The last of the minor orders was that of the acolyte( acolitus , often spelt accolitus in the registers), whose role was to carry the candlestick, to light the lights of the churches, and to pour wine at Mass. At his ordination he received a candlestick

with a candle which was placed in his hands by the arch-deacon ,as a sign that the lights of the church would be in his care; moreover an empty urceolus, or cruet, was given to him as a symbol of his function of presenting at the altar the eucharistic wine.<sup>(1)</sup>

The minor orders seem usually to have been taken together in medieval England. These could be received at any age and their recipients could, and often did marry or take up lay employment without ever rising further in the clerical hierarchy. The three major orders of subdeacon, deacon and priest, were taken very seriously. They could only be administered one at a time, and a minimum age was stipulated: for a subdeacon it was eighteen, for a deacon it was twenty and for a priest, twenty-five. Importantly, each of the major orders involved an irrevocable vow of celibacy.<sup>(2)</sup>

The thirteenth-century bishops' registers and rolls of institutions usually give the status of those presented to livings or benefices, whether they were clericus, acolitus, diaconus, subdiaconus, capellanus, presbyterus or the exalted canonicus. Later scribes were not always so careful, and there are frequent gaps in the descriptions of some of the presentees.

The word capellanus occurs very frequently in the thirteenth-century episcopal registers in describing a man's orders, and is used instead of the more precise term of presbyter or priest. Specific references to a man's being a priest is very rare in Hugh of Wells' registers of institutions (1209-35), and it occurs only five times in Robert Grosseteste's register (1235-53), and of these none is in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.<sup>(3)</sup> 102 men were instituted

to rectories in the Huntingdon archdeaconry of whom fifty-two are described as subdeacons and one as a deacon, (4) namely, Thomas who was instituted to Walkern(Herts.) in 1238; twenty-nine are described as capellanus , and twenty have no description. (5) Whereas all those who were instituted to vicarages, with one notable exception, are described as capellani, that is men who were in priest's orders. Nicholas de Catworth, presented by the abbot and convent of Westminster to Ashwell, is described as subdiaconus and in ea canonice vicarius perpetuus institutus. (6) This is unusual during this period, as all those instituted to vicarages were expected to celebrate the Mass and to be in priest's orders. Unfortunately, there are no ordination registers for Grosseteste's episcopate , so that we are unable to follow this subdeacon's career. He would certainly have needed an assistant in priest's orders to celebrate the Mass.

Gravesend's register shows that some 110 men were instituted to rectories in the Huntingdon archdeaconry: fourteen were priests, thirteen are described as capellani ( abbreviated to c. in the register), three as clerks. There were eleven deacons and sixty-one subdeacons, while eight have no description at all. It is significant that the patrons of Ashwell, the abbot and convent of Westminster, continued to present men who were not priests to the vicarage: John de Estre, who was presented to Ashwell in 1268, was still in deacon's orders. (7) Thereafter it should have been more difficult for anyone to be presented to a living who was not in priest's orders, as the bishops from 1275, as has been stated, inserted a special clause enforcing the clauses of the licet canon ensuring personal

residence and the promotion to priest's orders. (8)

Despite this injunction and the threat of deprivation, rectors instituted after 1274 were for the most part subdeacons. The ordination lists for Oliver Sutton(1280-99) show large numbers of beneficed subdeacons.(9) Some were dilatory and had to be re-presented: Robert of Swillington, a deacon, was re-presented by the abbot and convent of Missenden to the church of Glatton(Hunts.), made vacant because the said Robert had not been ordained priest within a year of his institution.(10) His successor, Sir Walter of Amersham, was to receive the diaconate and priesthood from any Catholic bishop, provided he swore that he had done so within a year of his institution.(11) Peter Martin was re-presented to Great Gaddesden on 25 February, 1291, because he had not been ordained priest within a year of his institution.(12) However, he did fulfil the requirement thereafter, as he was ordained deacon on 22 September, 1291 at Grantham, and ordained priest at Wycombe on 22 December, 1291.(13)(14) John of Sutton, also re-presented to Broughton(Hunts.), fulfilled the requirements of ordination and was ordained subdeacon, deacon and priest in successive ordinations.(15) Andrew of Lincoln, re-presented by the king, because he had failed to fulfil the requirements of the canon, was ordained priest and instituted on the same day, as was shown.(16)

The canon seems to have been lightly regarded in the fourteenth century, as numerous presentations were made to those who were in minor orders. For instance, Richard Abel, an acolyte, was presented to Berkhamstead St. Peter in 1306. An inquiry found that he was under age. However, Clement V granted him a dispensation so that he could be presented.(17)

Bishops also disregarded the canon, as in 1300 the bishop of Ely, patron of Bluntisham, presented an acolyte, John of Blofield, to the rectory.<sup>(18)</sup> A total of sixty-seven men in minor orders were presented to rectories in the archdeaconry during Dalderby's episcopate (1300-1320).<sup>(19)</sup> On the other hand, the abbot and convent of Westminster seem at last to be obeying the canon, as Robert de Burndish, priest, was instituted to Ashwell, on their presentation.<sup>(20)</sup> Within the same period of twenty years in Burghersh's episcopate (1320-40), twenty-two men in minor orders were presented to rectories.<sup>(21)</sup> This was a considerable improvement on Dalderby's figures. However, a man's orders are not always specified. For example, in the later register of John Buckingham (1363-98), the orders of seventy-two men are unknown.<sup>(22)</sup> If one allows for the fact that a number of these men could have been in minor orders, this would still show an improvement on Dalderby's figures, as only thirty men are recorded who were in minor orders when presented to their rectories out of a total of 327 presentations.<sup>(23)</sup>

Matters improved considerably during the fifteenth century. In Henry Beaufort's register (1398-1404) only five men are recorded as being in minor orders when presented to a benefice from a total of seventy-seven presentations.<sup>(24)</sup> Philip Repington's episcopate (1405-19) showed an increase: from a total of 173 institutions twenty-one men in minor orders were instituted to rectories.<sup>(25)</sup> Details of the improvements made throughout the rest of the century are given in the appendix.<sup>(26)</sup> John Longland (1521-47), however, seems to have reversed the trend of the previous century, as his register records that fifty-four men in minor orders out of a total of 140 were instituted to rectories.

## Clergy on Leave

A number of clergy who were in minor orders were at university and would often proceed to major orders at the end of their studies. Others frequently held posts in addition to their rectories which provided the means of revenue for a better life-style than those with only one benefice. Some were employed in the service of the state or the king, as has already been shown. Others were employed in the service of a nobleman. Bishop Burghersh's register, for example, is full of references to those who were occupied in this way. Walter of Stratton, rector of Offord D'Arcy in 1321 was given a licence in July of that year to be in the service of Sir John Dengayne, Kt. for two years, and to be absent from his parish.<sup>(27)</sup> It is presumed that the parish was cared for by his assistants. John de Goushill, rector of Elton, was granted leave of absence to visit the Roman curia on his own business and that of his church on 6 October, 1321, with the proviso that he was to return to his church within a year of the completion of his business.<sup>(28)</sup>

Reginald de Bothely, rector of St. Nicholas, Hertford, in 1322, had a licence to be in the service of Blanche, lady Wake de Lydell for three years.<sup>(29)</sup> On 27 February, 1323 M. Walter of Stratton was given a further licence to be in the service of Ellen Dengayne for a period of two years, on the expiry of the period formerly granted to him.<sup>(30)</sup> Thomas de Castro Godrici, rector of Essendon (Herts.) was to be in the service of the earl of Pembroke for two years.<sup>(31)</sup>

Other clergy were to serve the bishops of other dioceses. M. William Mees, rector of St. Mary, Berkhamstead, sometimes

referred to as Northchurch, was to be in the service of John, bishop of Winchester, for two years,<sup>(32)</sup> while M. Thomas de Nassington, rector of Yaxley, was to be in the service of John, bishop of Exeter, for one year.<sup>(33)</sup> William de Ousthorp, rector of Somersham, was to be in the service of John,<sup>(34)</sup> bishop of Ely, patron of the living, for one year in May, 1328.

The successive bishops of Ely evidently reserved livings in their gift for their clerks. William de Ousthorpe, (supra) had his service at the end of a year, extended for two more years on 16 May, 1329.<sup>(35)</sup> His successor, Richard de Burton, was to be in the bishop's service for three years from 8 October, 1331.<sup>(36)</sup> On 16 April, 1334, the licence was renewed for a further term of three years.<sup>(37)</sup>

Five incumbents were granted licences to be in the king's service: Edmund of London, rector of Washingley, was to serve for a year from 16 October, 1331.<sup>(38)</sup> This was extended for another year on 25 October, 1333.<sup>(39)</sup> M. Gilbert of Kelshall, rector of Cottered, was also to be in the king's service for a year, also starting in October 1333.<sup>(40)</sup> The rector of Little Stukeley had the interesting task of serving the king in the Roman curia for a year from 7 May 1334.<sup>(41)</sup> John de Wynewyk (Winwick), the rector of North Mimms, was allowed to be absent for three years in the king's service and to farm his benefice. A note was added in the register that the bishop's ministers are ordered not to take any action concerning his non-residence since 5 June last. The licence was dated 30 September, 1340.<sup>(42)</sup>

Buchard de Vernoun was retained by queen Isabella for a year on 11 April, 1334. He was to farm his benefice of Warboys.<sup>(43)</sup> A year later he was allowed to leave his parish

in order to travel overseas on his own business and that of his church. However, he was required to return before the Michaelmas following.<sup>(44)</sup> Evidently, he complied with the injunction, as on 8 November, 1335 he was again retained in the queen's service for a year.<sup>(45)</sup>

Others were granted licences to go on pilgrimage: Baldwin the vicar of Bengoe (Herts.) was to visit the shrines of St. James (Compostella?) and St. Nicholas (possibly Bari in southern Italy) in 1336 to fulfil a vow. He had to return to his vicarage within a year.<sup>(46)</sup> Some were fortunate in receiving a licence to visit Rome: William of Stapleford had a licence to visit Rome 'on his own business and that of his church' and to return before Pentecost. The licence was dated 8 January, 1328.<sup>(47)</sup>

Some had special treatment. John de Haselarton, rector of Hatfield (Herts.) received a licence to be in the service of Sir John de Haselarton, kt., (father) for two years from 1336, and to farm his benefice.<sup>(48)</sup> What the service was is unknown. Others had leave to live in a priory for a period of time. William of Clifton, rector of Great Gaddesden, had to live in the household of the prior of Ravenston (Bucks.) for a year.<sup>(49)</sup> The reason is not given. Unusually, William of Clifton was granted a licence two years previously, in 1333, to live in the household of the vicar of Newark for two years.<sup>(50)</sup> His successor, John de Wik, was also an absentee, having been granted a licence in 1337 to be absent in the service of Thomas, bishop of Hereford, and Alan de Cherleton, kt., his brother, for a year.<sup>(51)</sup>

The above references are given as examples of the many licences granted for leave of absence. Some licences were



granted for study. A number of licences were granted without any reason being given. John Howden , rector of Clothall (Herts.) was granted a licence in March 1410/11 for three years non-residence. This was probably for study leave, but it was not specified.<sup>(52)</sup>

### The Clergy and Education

Study leave became increasingly important in the life and work of the Church. Indeed the only way to the priesthood was by means of education. Although schools are found in some of the towns in the diocese, for instance, in Lincoln, Northampton, Oxford, Stamford and Huntingdon<sup>(53)</sup>, the ignorance of the clergy was the subject of constant comment and legislation from the thirteenth century onwards. From the episcopal registers it is evident that comparatively few, apart from absentee rectors, obtained a university education, and of these not all proceeded to the degree of Magister in Artibus.

Commenting on the ignorance of the clergy in his Gemma Ecclesiastica , late in the twelfth century, Gerald of Wales gave many examples of the bad Latinity, the grammatical blunders and the appalling ignorance of many of the clergy. One of the worst examples cited by him is the account of the priest who was giving a sermon on the Canaanite woman and said that she was part dog and part woman! He did not know the difference between cananaeam and caninam .<sup>(54)</sup>

There is no doubt that the education of the clergy left much to be desired. Attempts to improve the situation were made by all the bishops of Lincoln from the thirteenth century onwards. Even so, any schools which were unlicensed were suppressed. Thus, during Robert Chesney's episcopate

(1148-66), the canons of Huntingdon priory complained that contrary to the papal privilege and episcopal confirmation, certain persons kept unlicensed schools to the prejudice of the schools of Huntingdon. The archdeacon and the rural (55) deans were instructed to suppress these unlicensed schools.

Basic educational needs were probably met at parish level, and the budding ordinand would rely very much on his parish priest for support and encouragement. All the clergy, whether in major or minor orders, would be required to say the Divine Office: the eight daily services of prayer and praise to God. Those who were priests would celebrate a daily Mass. Apart from being able to read these liturgical texts in Latin, they would also be required to sing plainsong.

In the thirteenth century real efforts were made to improve the standards of clerical learning. Bishop Hugh of Wells (1209-35), influenced by the reforming zeal of Pope Innocent III shown at the fourth Lateran Council of 1215, determined to carry out educational reforms. Thus, if any potential incumbent's educational ability was suspect or inadequate, he would order that man to attend the schools: his rolls show that 101 men were so ordered.<sup>(56)</sup> Nine of these were from the archdeaconry of Huntingdon.

Stephen de Holwell, clerk(probably an acolyte), was enjoined, on his presentation to Caldecot (Hunts.) to study in the schools and to cause himself to be taught singing (et in officio cantandi se faciat edoceri). He was required to appoint a suitable chaplain to minister in the parish during his absence, otherwise he would be deprived of his living.<sup>(57)</sup> Saher de Littlebiri, on being instituted to Diddington (Hunts.), was also required to attend the schools

under pain of deprivation, if he failed.<sup>(58)</sup> William de Burgh, a clerk, instituted to St. Andrew, Huntingdon, had to attend the schools and proceed to major orders, and the bishop had to be informed of his progress.<sup>(59)</sup> Sometimes the school is specified, as in the case of John de Berewic', a deacon, instituted to Molesworth (Hunts.), who had to attend the school at Lincoln for two years.<sup>(60)</sup>

Not everyone who attended the schools was successful. Richard, a clerk, presented by his mother to Shenley (Herts.), was found to be minus sufficienter litteratus after an inquiry by the archdeacon. However, the bishop thought that there was some hope of him (quia spes erat de eo), so he ordered the young man to attend the schools, under pain of deprivation. Hugh of Rochester was appointed as vicar, to care for the parish, while Richard was at university.<sup>(61)</sup>

Evidently he failed to reach the required standard, or he abandoned his studies, as in the following year, 1222, his mother presented Matthew, son of Waleran, to Shenley. He too was required to attend the schools and to study. Hugh of Rochester continued as vicar.<sup>(62)</sup> Matthew must have failed as, in the following year, 1223, Joan la Blunde, Richard's mother, presented John, a clerk, to Shenley, only without the proviso that he attend the schools.<sup>(63)</sup> The same injunctions were given to Peter de Alto Bosco on being instituted to Bygrave<sup>(64)</sup>, to John de Remdon, a subdeacon, on his institution to Sacombe (Herts.) and to Richard Foliot, also a subdeacon, who was instituted to Brington (Hunts.).<sup>(65)</sup>

Robert Grosseteste shared his predecessor's concern for the quality of ordinands and their education, and worked to improve them. He had no hesitation in rejecting those

presented to benefices, if they were found to be lacking in those qualities for cure of souls. It made no difference to him who the patron was who was presenting, be they laymen of great families, friends, monastic houses, even the King or the Pope. So far as he was able, he determined to apply his principles to the patronage of churches in his diocese. Grosseteste's register shows that a number of those presented to churches were not admitted because of their illiteracy. Perhaps standards had improved in the archdeaconry, as only two men presented to churches were rejected.

In 1248 William Sisseverne, presented to Ayot St. Lawrence, was rejected (et propter insufficientiam litterature non admisso), but nevertheless he was to have a pension of three marks a year.<sup>(66)</sup> Richard of Elstow was presented by the abbess and nuns of Elstow abbey to the church of Great Wymondley (Herts.) and he was canonically instituted perpetual vicar with the usual burdens of a vicarage, that he reside and serve the cure. However, Bishop Grosseteste was not entirely satisfied and felt that he should be re-examined concerning his behaviour and manners ( Debet nihilominus reexaminari quomodo profecerit et faciet constare de conversatione et de meritis persone sue.)<sup>(67)</sup>

Richard Gravesend (1258-79) shared the same concern for the clergy and their education as his predecessors. Unfortunately, his rolls do not exhibit the details given in those of Hugh of Wells and Robert Grosseteste. Only two men presented to livings in the archdeaconry are recorded as being insufficient: the first, William de Longueville, presented to Orton Longueville in 1264, and evidently a local man, was required to present himself for examination at the end of a year.<sup>(68)</sup>

Peter Pycot, presented by Sir Peter Pycot, kt. to North Mimms in 1277, was rejected both on account of his defectum litterature and etatis, and M. Eustace de Wrotham was instituted instead. Evidently, this was a family living, and Sir Peter Pycot had hoped to promote his youthful son.<sup>(69)</sup> Oliver Sutton's registers (1280 -99) reveal even fewer references to study leave, and none for the archdeaconry of Huntingdon.

It had become the practice for bishops to release canons and other higher clergy from their benefices for the purpose of study, it was not until the publication of Boniface VIII's constitution Cum ex eo in 1298 that the practice gained momentum.

The main aim of Cum ex eo was to provide opportunities of education for the parochial clergy before ordination to the priesthood and before they shouldered the full burden of pastoral care.<sup>(70)</sup> Bishops, in virtue of this constitution, were at liberty to grant leave of absence for study to the parochial clergy, provided that they proceed to the sub-diaconate within a year of the termination of the licence. Suitable priests were to take over the administration of their parishes while they were away at university. Those who were students had legal access to the revenues of their parishes, so that they could pay for their studies at university.

The men who were put in charge of the parishes during the absence of the incumbents on study leave were to receive a reasonable share of the parish revenues. Thus, parishes were paying for the education of their absent rectors, and in a sense investing in the future. The absence could be for a long time, as the education of their rectors could take

up to seven years ,since Boniface VIII gave bishops the power to grant leave of absence for study at a university for that period of time.

Normally, rectors who enjoyed Cum ex eo licences were not parish priests in the true sense of the term, nor priests at all when they were given their licences. Most of them were simple clerics. As the Dominican John Bromyard put it in his Summa praedicatorum, written c.1348, 'the final clause of Cum ex eo was to promote a literate clergy', and those who had licences ' should study some theology for a while, and then, without waiting for a degree, return to their parishes and glorify God by confirming their parishioners in faith by word and example'.<sup>(71)</sup>

The fourteenth century witnessed a marked increase in the number of those wishing to obtain licences for study under the terms of the new constitution (iuxta formam constitutionis novelle).<sup>(72)</sup> John Dalderby's register shows that he granted 547 licences for study from March 1300 to December 1319.<sup>(73)</sup> Thirty-seven of these were granted to incumbents in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.<sup>(74)</sup> Some clergy were granted extensions: Philip de Barton, rector of Weston (Herts.), originally granted a dispensation to study under the terms of the new constitution for one year from 10 September 1301, had it renewed for a further year from 28 October 1302.<sup>(75)</sup> John, rector of Willian, was also granted an extension of his original dispensation, which was first given on 10 November,1305, for a further four years from 29 October ,1308.<sup>(76)</sup>

Similar extensions to their original dispensations were also granted to the rectors of Hinxworth, Yelling and Yaxley.<sup>(77)</sup>

Others were treated more generously, in keeping with the aims of Boniface VIII's constitution. Thus, John Hubert de Aslackby, an acolyte, rector of Woodston (Hunts.) was granted a dispensation to be absent for study from 1 May 1319 for a period of seven years. Presumably John Hubert was regarded as a 'high flier' who was expected to complete the seven years necessary to obtain the degree of Magister in Artibus. This was the maximum time allowed for absence from a parish under the terms of Cum ex eo. It is not known if he completed his studies, as in 1321 he resigned his living of Woodston, and was succeeded by M. John de Elm, who was still an acolyte. (78)

The number of those availing themselves of dispensations for study under the new constitution increased considerably under Bishop Burghersh (1320-40). He granted fifty-five (79) licences to clergy serving in the Huntingdon archdeaconry. A further thirty-six licences, not necessarily under the Cum ex eo constitution, and licences to let churches to farm, to finance such study, were granted between October 1323 and May 1340. (80) Eleven licences were granted for study during Bishop Bek's short episcopate (1342-47) to clergy from the archdeaconry. (81)

With John Gynwell's episcopate (1347-62) there was a marked decline in the number of those obtaining licences for study. With the high mortality rate among the clergy during the ravages of the Black Death from 1349-51, and the economic decline which followed, there were fewer requests for licences for study. Between June 1347 and November 1350 Gynwell granted fifty-one licences under the constitution Cum ex eo for the whole diocese. (82) Three were

granted to rectors in the archdeaconry.<sup>(83)</sup>

Gynwell's successor, John Buckingham(1363-97)granted dispensations under the new constitution to five clergy from parishes in the archdeaconry.<sup>(84)</sup> These figures bear out the truth of Dr.Emden's observation,'In the earlier (episcopal) registers a considerable amount of space is devoted to recording the licences given by bishops to clergy under the papal constitution Cum ex eo ... By the middle of the fourteenth century the number of licences for study had notably declined; in the fifteenth century they seldom occur'.<sup>(85)</sup>

During Philip Repingdon's episcopate(1405-19) a total of thirty-six licences were granted in the diocese of which only four were granted to those serving in the archdeaconry.<sup>(86)</sup> However,there were general licences for study not specifically under the terms of the constitution Cum ex eo, of which one was granted to John Creeton, rector of St.Peter's,Great Berkhamstead for one year's non-residence for study. His church was to be let to farm.<sup>(87)</sup>

The registers of those bishops who followed him are devoid of specific references to the constitution Cum ex eo, and the number referring to study are comparatively few. R. N.Swanson has suggested that the universities experienced a crisis of patronage between 1350 and 1430,and it was much more difficult for their members either to obtain the type of benefice which would permit non-residence for continued study, or to enter the patronage structure after their university experience to obtain their first benefice.<sup>(88)</sup> This is possibly one reason why numbers seeking study leave were so low. When references are made to absence in bishops' registers, they are not always clear whether such absence is



for study. Thus, in Bishop Chedworth's register of memoranda (1452-71) the vicar of Rushden concessa erat licencia non residendi vicarie de Russhden per unum annum duratur.<sup>(89)</sup>

Although references to study leave are infrequent in fifteenth-and sixteenth-century bishops' registers, we know from the registers of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge that clerks from the diocese of Lincoln and in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon were admitted to study, and that some graduated. The Episcopal Court Book of William Atwater (1514-20) reveals that several clergy were given leave of absence and a licence of non-residence to pursue their studies. Thomas Erle, vicar of Great Paxton(Hunts.) had a licence for two years study.<sup>(90)</sup> Similarly, Joseph Stepney, rector of Letchworth had a licence for two years study. Evidently, he overstayed his leave , as he was suspended in a later citation.<sup>(91)</sup>

Despite the granting of licences for study throughout the middle ages, the vast majority of the clergy were non-graduates. For instance, twenty-two clergy out of a total of 192 presented to churches in the archdeaconry between 1300 and 1319 were graduates. During Burghersh's episcopate (1320-40) 247 presentations were made to rectories, vicarages, and chantries in the archdeaconry, and of these only twenty-nine were graduates. In the Huntingdon archdeaconry, at least, this was a poor proportion.

### **The Cure of Souls**

From 1100 the parish had become the established primary unit of evangelism. The main function of the persona or rector of a parish, or vicar, if the church were appropriated, was the government or care of souls, the cura

animarum, and his primary duty was to be in residence in his parish.<sup>(92)</sup> It was the aim of the bishops of the thirteenth century to make certain that no parish suffered because of neglect, ignorance or laxity. All the clergy knew what was expected of them. The thirteenth-century bishops' registers of institutions frequently contain the words cum onere et pena vicariorum. Such duties, St. Thomas Aquinas felt, did not require any great learning. However, he granted that a priest with a cure of souls would need to know 'those things which pertain to the teaching of faith and morals', a knowledge of what his parishioners by the law of the Church, should believe and observe.<sup>(93)</sup>

What was required of his clergy was laid down by Robert Grosseteste (1235-53). Shortly after he became bishop of Lincoln he issued a set of constitutions requiring the clergy in his diocese to know and teach the people in the mother tongue, the decalogue, the seven deadly sins, the seven sacraments and the creed. The clergy were also to recite the Divine Office in its entirety with devout attention. All pastors, after reciting the offices in church, are to give themselves diligently to prayers and the reading of Holy Scripture. Parish priests must be ready by day or by night to visit the sick when required to do so, lest by their negligence they die without confession, communion and unction.<sup>(94)</sup>

In addition 'parish priests and rectors are to see that the children of their parishioners are diligently taught to know the Lord's Prayer, the creed, the Salutation of the Blessed Virgin, and how to sign themselves with the sign of the cross, and adults who come to confession should be

examined as to the knowledge of these and be instructed as far as is fitting'.<sup>(95)</sup>

There was nothing new about these constitutions, as they embodied the decrees of the Lateran Council of 1215 and of the legatine Council of London of 1237.<sup>(96)</sup> One of the duties particularly emphasised was that of confessor. Among the Lateran decrees a very prominent position was given by the bishops to the enactment imposing on all Christians who had arrived at the years of discretion, the duty of confessing as well as of communicating at least once in the year. Instructions were also laid down for the priest: 'the priest, moreover, shall be discreet and cautious, so that in the manner of the skilful physician he may pour wine and oil upon the wounds of the injured, diligently searching out the circumstances both of the sinner and of the sin, that from these he may prudently understand what manner of advice he ought to apply, employing various measures in order to heal the sick'.<sup>(97)</sup>

The clergy were also expected to preach. This was made clear in an early document of the twelfth century, written for the Irish clergy. In 1107-1111 Gilbert, bishop of Limerick, wrote an exposition of the rights and duties of the various ranks of the church in his 'De Statu ecclesiae' to instruct the Irish church. His background is unknown, but he is presumed to have been a Norman and to have been influenced by Anselm whom he had met at Rouen. It is felt that Gilbert's work owed a great deal to his observations of English conditions.<sup>(98)</sup> Among the duties required of a priest was that of preaching.<sup>(99)</sup>

G.R.Owst points out that it was Bishop Grosseteste 'who

had put popular preaching first among the priestly duties'.<sup>(100)</sup> Unfortunately, there are no references to preachers in the early manuscripts of the diocese. However, with the onset of Lollardy in the late fourteenth century and the attack on almost all the leading elements in medieval Christianity, the importance of preaching was once more recognized. Thus Philip Repingdon (1405-19) on 11 April 1405 issued a mandate to the official of the archdeacon of Huntingdon to take measures against unlicensed preachers within the archdeaconry. Rectors, vicars and chaplains of parish churches in the archdeaconry were directed not to admit preachers unless they had the bishop's licence.<sup>(101)</sup>

Repingdon granted a number of licences to preach within his diocese, of which three were specifically granted for the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. William Staines of Baldock, chaplain, is to preach at suitable places and times within the archdeaconry.<sup>(102)</sup> John Crouche, rector of Sutton, is to preach in the archdeaconry for one year.<sup>(103)</sup> On 21 December 1415, Thomas Thirkell, M.A. has a licence to preach in the archdeaconries of Lincoln and Huntingdon during the bishop's pleasure.<sup>(104)</sup>

Some, it would appear, were reluctant to preach. Bishop Longland's Visitation returns reveal that the vicar of Ashwell (Herts.) 'had not preached the word of God for ten years'.<sup>(105)</sup> How frequently the clergy preached cannot be known for certain. However, every effort was made to see that they knew what to preach. Archbishop Pecham's Constitutions of 1281 had laid upon the parish clergy the task of expounding his programme of instructions at least on four occasions in the year: 'upon one or more holy days each

priest having charge of the people, either personally or through someone else, shall explain to the people in their mother tongue without any fantastic subtlety, the fourteen articles of faith, the ten commandments of the decalogue, the two precepts of the gospels (love of God and love of man), the seven works of mercy, the seven deadly sins with their offspring, the seven cardinal virtues and the seven sacraments of grace'.<sup>(106)</sup> Pecham's Constitutions were constantly referred to for almost two hundred years. Unfortunately, very little of what the parish clergy preached on Sundays and Holy Days has survived.

It is probable that many clergy relied on the numerous manuals that had been written for their instruction. The fourteenth century abounds with handbooks for the benefit of both the preacher and the educated layman. Many were from the pens of renowned Dominican and Franciscan preachers, while others were either pseudonymous or anonymous. They offered to the parish priest guidance in the preparation of his sermons and in the art of illustrating them so as to bring the message to the level of the hearer.

There were to hand many aids for the indifferent preacher. Robert Mannyng of Brun (or Bourne), a Gilbertine canon of Sempringham in Lincolnshire based his Handlyng Synne, written c.1303, on an earlier Anglo-Norman work, Manuel des Peches of William of Wadington, with many<sup>(107)</sup> omissions and additions. It is in reality a collection of tales and anecdotes and concrete instances illustrating the vices and weaknesses of man. The ten commandments feature prominently in this work and in most sermons of the period as well as in the interrogation of penitents in confession.

The tales used by Robert Mannyng to illustrate the commandments found their way into sermons.

With the spread of preaching in the fourteenth century, vernacular collections of homilies were prepared for delivery by the not so learned parish priest. In his work on Exempla (108) J.A.Mosher points out that lively tales were used in sermons. Medieval favourites were the legends of Theophilus, the pilgrim to St.James ; the story of St.Eustace ( a sort of medieval Job), whose constancy in spite of a long series of persecutions was a means of converting many heathen, according to the story. Over and over again, says Mosher, these and similar tales were copied in sermons, example books and collections of tales and didactic treatises.

On the whole fourteenth-century preachers seem to have found much to blame and little to praise in the life about them. Gluttons are constantly 'gulpande in as a gredy sowe (109) in the draffe stoke'. False friends are like hostlers for 'we see well that ostelers in many places their will renne gladdely ageyns pilgryms to prey hem to com to their innes, and draveth hem by the honde, and behoteth hem many delycate thinges. Fayre he speke with hem and eteth and drynketh with hem, and lawygyth, and makes gret chere unto that thei shall com to acounte, in the wicke a-counte thei will nowthe for-geue. But that thei be goye, iff that thei see newe, anon thei renne to the newe, and of the firste thei recke no more of. And on the same wise thei do to the newe when thei have accounted as thei dud to the firste'. (110)

This preoccupation with sins was carried on into the confessional. Great pains were taken to provide private advice for individual difficulties. It was urged frequently

that without confession and absolution no soul was safe. The danger of dying unshriven was a well-known theme.

### The Faithfulness of the Clergy

The records of the early centuries show that the clergy were fairly stable, and did not move about from parish to parish, and the problem of many exchanges of benefices came later. However, a severe test of their faithfulness came to them during the plagues of the fourteenth century. During this century the work of both parish priest and mendicant preacher were almost brought to a standstill by the disastrous effects of the Black Death. The summer and autumn of 1348 had been abnormally wet, and the crops had been left to rot in the fields. Late that summer reports had reached London that the fishing taxes had not been collected in Guernsey and Jersey because so many fishermen had been taken ill and the boats had not gone out. The men of Melcombe in Dorset were the first in England to be infected when two ships landed in June 1348, one carrying a sailor bearing with him from Gascony the seeds of the terrible plague. After (111) that it spread with fearsome virulence. Henry Knighton, a canon of St. Mary's, Leicester, wrote in his chronicle these ominous words: ' Isto anno et anno sequenti erat generalis mortalitas hominum in universo mundo ', announcing the arrival of the Black Death. (112)

Compared with some counties, Hertfordshire and Huntingdonshire were less affected. March and April 1349 were the worst months. In the low-lying fen district St. Ives lost only 23% of its beneficed clergy. Even so, as Ziegler points out, 'this is not to detract from the agonies which the inhabitants endured: to the victims it mattered remarkably little

whether the mortality was 37% or a mere 34%, the risk and the pain of death seemed much the same.<sup>(113)</sup> A Latin inscription scratched on the walls of Ashwell church in Hertfordshire tells of the terror which fell upon the people when the plague struck:

'1350- Miserable, savage, crazed,  
Only the worst of people remain as witnesses,  
And to cap it all came a tempest  
With St. Maur thundering over the earth'.<sup>(114)</sup>

In Huntingdonshire the Black Death seems to have followed much the same course as in East Anglia. 'By 1363', read the preamble to the town charter, Huntingdon 'was so weakened by mortal pestilence and other calamities that it was quite unable to pay its taxes'. A quarter of the town was said to be uninhabited and the remaining residents could scarcely find the means of supporting life. Three churches were derelict, their parishioners were either dead or departed.<sup>(115)</sup> Holy Trinity church, Huntingdon, could have been one of the derelict churches, as it is last mentioned in Gynwell's register of institutions in November 1348 when John de Tychemarsh was presented by King Edward III.<sup>(116)</sup>

Between Lady Day 1349 and Lady Day 1350 Bishop Gynwell instituted eighty-three clergy to parishes within the archdeaconry of which fifty-seven were made void by the death of the previous incumbent. Fifteen clergy resigned; three exchanged benefices, while eight have no reasons given for the vacancies.<sup>(117)</sup> Among those presented to livings in the archdeaconry at this time was the distinguished clerk of Chancery, Thomas Brembre, already prebendary of Milton Manor in Lincoln cathedral; he was presented to Watton at Stone by



Sir John Bardolf, kt..<sup>(118)</sup> Possibly the most courageous priest was Roger Turneye, rector of Welwyn, who exchanged his country living with John Vernone, rector of St. Peter ad Tamesiam, near the wharf of London, on 24 August 1350.<sup>(119)</sup> Perhaps both men thought that the ravages of the plague were over and that it was safe to exchange. However, the plague returned in 1361, in 1369 and 1374-5.

Henry Knighton wrote, 'In 1361 a general mortality oppressed the people. It was called the second pestilence, and both rich and poor died, but especially young people and children. Eleven canons of our house died'.<sup>(120)</sup> The effects of the 1361 visitation of the pestilence were certainly as devastating as those of 1349. Bishop Gynwell instituted sixty-three clergy to vacant parishes in the archdeaconry of which forty-five had been made void by the death of the previous incumbent.<sup>(121)</sup>

The worst months appear to have been September and October when twenty-one institutions occurred in benefices in which the former incumbents had died.<sup>(122)</sup> This visitation of the plague had a severe effect on the archdeaconry, especially in Huntingdonshire. However, Philip Ziegler makes the cautionary point that the misfortunes of the town of Huntingdon, as with many rural areas in England, were not solely due to the Black Death or even to the cumulative effects of the various epidemics. More important and more constant was the economic decline of the whole area, and of Huntingdon in particular, which long preceded the violent shock of the plague.<sup>(123)</sup>

The plague undoubtedly devastated England, and it has been estimated that from a quarter to a third of the

population died between 1348 and 1367, reducing the inhabitants from four millions to perhaps two and a half.<sup>(124)</sup>

The effect of the various plagues of this century on the monasteries was considerable. The Black Death had seen the demise of several heads of religious houses. In the archdeaconry of Huntingdon six houses were left without a head. On 19 August Bishop Gynwell confirmed the election of Richard of Skenyngton to the abbacy of Ramsey, on the death of Robert of Nassington.<sup>(125)</sup> William of Beaumont, a Norman monk of Bec Hellouin, was admitted to the daughter priory of St. Neots on 10 August 1349.<sup>(126)</sup> On 13 August 1349 John of Weston was provided to the Augustinian priory of St. Mary, Huntingdon in place of Reynold of Bluntisham, and on 11 July 1349 Roger of Beston took the place of William Legat at Little Wymondley, also an Augustinian house.<sup>(127)</sup> John of Stowe was admitted to the priory of Stoneley on 5 August 1349.<sup>(128)</sup> On 3 May 1349 Joan of Titchmarsh was provided, under a commission from the bishop, to the priory of St. James, Hinchbrook, on the death of the former prioress, Isabel Blythe.<sup>(129)</sup>

As a result of the death of so many villeins, labour became very scarce. Villeins could no longer be compelled to perform services or even stay on the manor when others could offer higher wages. On the east Midland Ramsey estates the plague had badly interrupted demesne cultivation, and to meet the decline in income the Abbey decided to switch from services to rents for its customary lands. Ramsey Abbey was heavily in debt before 1349 and in the decade after the Black Death there was a fall in money income in spite of the switch to rents.<sup>(130)</sup>

However, J.L.Bolton points out that Ramsey and Battle abbey are atypical. Elsewhere there was little interruption in the pattern of demesne farming in the 1350s and 1360s.<sup>(131)</sup> D.Knowles expresses the same point of view that, although the economic shock was great, and its consequences permanent at least in part, the view cannot be accepted that sees in the Black Death and its satellites the chief cause of the alleged economic distress of the monasteries in the later Middle Ages.<sup>(132)</sup> Knowles saw the Black Death as an accelerator of changes already under way.

The place of the monasteries in religious importance was taken to some extent by colleges of chantry priests, which were already becoming general. From this time until the Reformation an enormous number of chantries of one or two priests were endowed in parish churches, chiefly by the benefactions of members of the rising middle class. Increasingly, people requested prayers for the dead and paid for obits.

Strangely, although many parish priests seem to have fulfilled their duties adequately, even bravely, they lost popularity as a result of the plague. Somehow people felt let down and they noted that the parish priest was as likely to die of the plague as his neighbour. Evidently, they were regarded with disfavour by a number of chroniclers, who felt that they had failed in their duties.

G.G.Coulton gives the judgement of twenty-two chroniclers, English and foreign, upon the behaviour of the clergy during the pestilence. He writes, 'Of the least favourable one only is entirely favourable; but he speaks only for his own neighbourhood (Kent). The two next best, while praising

the friars or the nurses, contrast these with the negligent behaviour of the parish priests'.<sup>(133)</sup>

Some , undoubtedly, ran away in fear or in search of gain and were thought to have put their own skins first and the souls of their parishioners second. The chronicler of the archbishops, Stephen Birchington in Vitae Archiepiscorum complained that ' ... parishes remained altogether unserved and beneficed parsons had turned away from the care of their benefices for fear of death'.<sup>(134)</sup>

While this general indictment has some truth in it, it is significant that most of the clergy in the archdeaconry remained in their parishes throughout the Black Death, many, as has been shown, dying in them. The criticism of Langland that 'since the pestilence time' priests can no longer make a living in their parishes, so they wander to London:

'Parsons and Parish priests pleynd them to the bishop,  
That their parishes were poor sith the pestilence-time,  
To have a licence and a leave at London for to dwell,  
And singen there for simony; for silver is sweet'.<sup>(135)</sup>

may have been true of some, but the evidence of the episcopal register of institutions gives a different picture of the rectors and vicars of parishes. Unfortunately, there is no evidence available concerning the great number of assistant clergy. It is possible that Langland's strictures applied to them, but certainly not to the incumbents, at least, of the archdeaconry. Indeed, some clergy remained faithful throughout the ravages of the Black Death only to die at the next visitation of the pestilence in 1361. For instance, Simon de Rous was instituted to Great Catworth in the year of the first visitation of the plague in 1349 on July 5, only

to die in 1361.<sup>(136)</sup> Peter de Ower who was instituted to Eynesbury on 18 May 1349, died in September 1361, when the second visitation of the plague was at its height.<sup>(137)</sup> Walter Blow, instituted to St.Mary, St.Neots on 16 July 1349, when the Black Death was at its most virulent in Huntingdonshire, died sometime before 24 November 1361, when his successor was instituted.<sup>(138)</sup>

Some good did come out of the Black Death in that the great majority of benefices went to those who were in priests orders. Previously, many livings had been given to men not yet in priests orders. The Black Death and the subsequent visitation of the plague changed all that. Not all the effects of the Black Death were so efficacious. Henry Knighton, the chronicler, noted a new acquisitiveness. In describing the shortage of clergy he wrote, ' So great was the shortage of clergy that many churches were desolate, being without divine offices. Hardly could a chaplain be got under £10 or ten marks to minister in any church, and where before a chaplain could be had for four or five marks, or two marks with board, so numerous were priests before the pestilence, now scarce any would accept a vicarage of £20 or twenty marks'.<sup>(139)</sup>

On the other hand, the priest of pre-pestilence days was not so well-paid compared with the pay of a foot archer in 1346. A foot archer received 3d. a day, which makes almost seven marks a year. An archer on horseback received double,<sup>(140)</sup> and an engineer or armourer as much as 10d. or 12d. a day.

Attempts to improve matters were made by Simon Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury in 1378. He ordained that 'each priest...celebrating masses for the souls of the dead

shall receive seven marks ,or three marks and their keep; but those with a cure of souls shall receive eight marks, or four marks and their keep: and in no way shall anyone receive more than this, unless the diocesan of the place has first given his permission, in consultation with those who have the cure of souls there'.<sup>(141)</sup>

Some clergy were satisfied with their lot ,as they remained in their parishes for a number of years. Walter Pollard was instituted to Great Stukeley in 1333 and remained there until his death in 1361.<sup>(142)</sup> Nicholas de Appiltre was instituted to Swineshead on 7 November 1349 and died there in 1361.<sup>(143)</sup> On 2 August 1349 Henry de Charwelton was instituted to the church of Offord D'Arcy, and remained there until his death in 1379, having accomplished a ministry of thirty years.<sup>(144)</sup> John de Charteriz, instituted to the church of St.Ives on 9 July 1336 on an exchange with the church of St.Matthew, Friday Street,London, and remained there throughout the Black Death until he exchanged his church in October 1355 for the church of Nettleham in the same diocese.<sup>(145)</sup> He is just another example of a faithful priest who saw his parishioners through the trauma of the Black Death.

### **The Clergy and Exchanges**

There were many clergy in the diocese and in the arch-deaconry like those cited above; but there were some who stayed only a short time in their cures before moving on to the next one. The reasons for an exchange are never given. Some clergy perhaps were tired of serving the same cure for a long period, or perhaps because of parochial dissension were eager to exchange their benefice for another within

the diocese or elsewhere. The procedure was quite straightforward. The records show that one of the bishops concerned with exchange would communicate with the other in order to carry out the detailed business of the exchange. This having been done, the bishop expediting the exchange would then send his certificate to the other. The newly-instituted rector or vicar would then resort in person or frequently send his proctor to swear canonical obedience to the bishop on his behalf.

Thirteenth-century clergy seem to have been contented with their lot as there were comparatively few exchanges, at least in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. However, by the end of the fourteenth century exchanges of benefices had reached enormous proportions. During Dalderby's episcopate (1300-1320) there were no exchanges recorded in his institution register for Huntingdon. However, Henry Burghersh (1320 -40), his successor, made up for this deficiency, in allowing fifty-three exchanges. Many of these exchanges were for churches within the diocese, while some clergy sought exchanges in far off dioceses such as Winchester and York. Wakely, in Hertfordshire, was exchanged by John Dardern for the church of Dorking in Winchester diocese on 2 April 1324.<sup>(146)</sup> Two relatives or possibly friends, appear to have exchanged in the same year: John de Sybthorp exchanged his church of Shenley (Herts.) with Thomas de Sybthorp, rector of North Collingham in the diocese of York.<sup>(147)</sup> Thomas did not remain long at Shenley, as he was instituted on 9 December 1324, in the person of his proctor, Hugh de Bardelby and resigned before 2 March 1325. Ralph de Gunthorp de Sybbethorp succeeded him.<sup>(148)</sup> Sibthorpe is in

Northamptonshire, it is possible that there was no family connection between all three clerks who merely came from the same area or village.

During Thomas Bek's short episcopate(1342-47) twenty-three churches were exchanged within the archdeaconry.<sup>(149)</sup> A desire to return to his roots may have been behind the exchange whereby the church of Little Gidding was exchanged with the church of Eglington in Durham diocese. William Cross of Bamburgh, comparatively near Eglington, probably wished to return to the north, and Richard de Aston was happy to return to an area familiar to him. Aston was within the archdeaconry of Huntingdon.<sup>(150)</sup>

John Gynwell permitted forty-six exchanges between 1347 and 1363. The advent of the Black Death between 1349-1350 slowed down the process of exchange for a while. The diocese of York continued to attract clergy from the diocese of Lincoln. In March 1347 Ralph de Turville exchanged the church of Yaxley with Richard de Tanfield, rector Brantingham in the diocese of York.<sup>(151)</sup> In September 1348 Richard de Wombewell exchanged his church of Stibbington(Hunts.) with Richard Wath, rector of Hokham in the diocese of York.<sup>(152)</sup>

The second half of the fourteenth century showed a marked increase in the number of exchanges. These are revealed in the voluminous institution records of John Buckingham (1362-98). His registers provide details of 278 exchanges in the Huntingdon archdeaconry alone: the number for the whole diocese must have been very considerable. Some exchanges were probably used as stepping stones to higher or more lucrative preferment. Cottered (Herts.), for instance, was exchanged for Walton in Winchester diocese on 10 April



1363 and then again on 10 January 1364 for a prebend in the collegiate church of Abergwili in the diocese of St.David's (Menevia).<sup>(153)</sup> On 28 February 1364 it was exchanged yet again for the church of Theydon in the diocese of London.<sup>(154)</sup>

Cottered was evidently a popular church throughout Buckingham's episcopate, as it was exchanged with St.Botolph Bishopsgate, London in November 1368, and again on 10 March 1371 in an exchange with the Hospital of the Poor Priests of St.Mary, Canterbury.<sup>155)</sup> On 3 September 1373 it was exchanged with the church of Bishop's Castle in the diocese of Hereford.<sup>(156)</sup> Thereafter the church seems to have been served by a settled priest until 4 December 1388 when it was exchanged yet again with a church within the diocese, Tempsford (Beds.).<sup>(157)</sup>

The above exchanges may, of course, have been genuine; but the earlier exchanges at Cottered in 1363 and 1364 appear to be suspicious. These could have been arranged by agents or 'chop churches', as they came to be called. The church of Haddon(Hunts.) seems to have been exchanged through the agency of a broker. In 1382 it was exchanged with Slipton (Northants.) in the same diocese on 19 June . On 26 July<sup>(158)</sup> in the same year it was exchanged with St.Mildred,Oxford.

The church of Great Gidding (Hunts.) was also exchanged in quick succession: on 26 October 1392 it was exchanged with the chantry of St.John of Welbourne in Lincoln cathedral. On 1 April 1393 it was exchanged with Stibbington (Hunts.), and on 31 July in the same year with Bilborough in the diocese of York.<sup>(159)</sup>

The custom of exchanging benefices had undoubtedly developed into an abuse. This led to the issue of Archbishop

Courtenay's strongly worded mandate against 'chop churches' in 1392, where he described them as 'accursed consorts in the guilt of Gehazi and Simon Magus'. (160)

It would appear that Courtenay's legislation had little effect at this time. His successor, Thomas Arundel, in his convocation address of 1399, insisted that the clergy be required to produce their letters of institution to benefices which they desired to exchange on account of fictiones et fraudes varias in permutationibus beneficiorum exercitas. (161)

Despite Arundel's strictures the exchanges continued. The institution register of Henry Beaufort (1398-1404) records fifty-eight exchanges within six years in the archdeaconry. The church of Stapleford (Herts.) seems to be an example of a church which had been used by brokers or 'chop church' men. It was exchanged with Buckland in Winchester diocese on 10 May 1400, and again on 11 August in the same year with the vicarage of St. Martin in-the-fields, London; no inquisition was held. (162) Further exchanges were arranged: on 27 July 1401, Stapleford was exchanged with Dymchurch in the diocese of Canterbury. (163) On the 7 January 1402, the church was yet again exchanged, with Ickenham, in the diocese of London. (164) If any of the above clergy who had exchanged had taken up a brief residence in the parish, such behaviour would have had a very unsettling effect on the parish. Presumably, they would never have been seen, and the work of caring for the people would have been in the hands of a permanent assistant. How far the patrons were involved it is difficult to assess, but the fact that on at least two occasions no inquisition was held is suspicious.

Within the fourteen years of his episcopate Philip Repingdon(1405-19) had allowed 126 exchanges to take place within the archdeaconry.<sup>(165)</sup> This does not mean necessarily that all these exchanges were arranged by chopchurch men, or that they were bad. Clearly, some were made for genuine reasons, but some, however, were undertaken with undue haste. Little Stukeley was exchanged with Stamford, within the diocese, on 16 March 1405, and within less than a year , on 18 December 1406 it was exchanged, again within the diocese, with Hemingford Abbots.<sup>(166)</sup> As both exchanging parties used proctors, the parishes may not have been unduly affected.

Sawtry All Saints experienced several exchanges in rapid succession: on 13 October 1412 it was exchanged with Hadlow in Rochester diocese, and again on 2 April 1413 with Doddington, in the diocese of London.<sup>(167)</sup> Then within a few months, on 28 June 1413, it was exchanged yet again within the diocese, with the church of Buckden.<sup>(168)</sup> Numerous other examples in the register of such rapid exchanges make one doubt the sincerity of those exchangers and their motives.

Richard Fleming's episcopate (1420-24 and 1425-31) saw a marked decline in the number of churches being exchanged. Within the eleven years of his episcopate only nineteen exchanges took place within the archdeaconry.<sup>(169)</sup> The most extraordinary exchange was that which took place on 23 August 1420, when the rector of Ripton Regis exchanged his benefice with John Thomas, archdeacon of Menevia(St.David's).<sup>(170)</sup> The latter did not remain long in his benefice, as he resigned at the end of the year, and on 26 January 1421 William Matthew was presented to the living by the king.<sup>(171)</sup>

The decline in the number of exchanges continued throughout the remainder of the fifteenth century. Gray's episcopate (1431-36) saw five exchanges within the archdeaconry.<sup>(172)</sup> Within the twelve years of William Alnwick's episcopate(1437-49) seventeen exchanges were carried out within the archdeaconry.<sup>(173)</sup> Therfield church experienced two exchanges within one month! Thomas Pette was instituted to Therfield on an exchange with Thomas Maunchell of Little Stukeley on 18 October 1443. He exchanged Therfield with Robert Wetheryngsete on 31 October 1443. He had been rector of Therfield for fourteen days. <sup>(174)</sup>

The number of exchanges increased during John Chedworth's episcopate(1452-71) to twenty-five within the archdeaconry. Most of the exchanges took place within the diocese.<sup>(175)</sup> Only one church was exchanged for a London benefice: on 8 May 1460 Thomas Kerby exchanged his vicarage of Ashwell with the perpetual chantry founded by John, the former duke of Lancaster, in the cathedral church of St.Paul, London.<sup>(176)</sup>

With Rotherham's episcopate(1472-80) single figures were reached for exchanges within the archdeaconry, and seven were recorded.<sup>(177)</sup> Five exchanges are recorded in John Russell's register for Huntingdon(1480-94).<sup>(178)</sup> With William Smith's episcopate (1495-1514) may be seen what was virtually the end of the practice of exchanging benefices. One entry only is recorded in the Huntingdon institutions. On 11 February 1512 the church of St.Andrew,Hertford was exchanged with Hemingford Grey,both being in the Huntingdon archdeaconry. <sup>(179)</sup>

Only two exchanges in the archdeaconry are recorded in William Atwater's register(1514-21), namely, Folksworth with

Denton, both within the diocese, on 18 December 1515.<sup>(180)</sup>  
Ardleigh, which was in the patronage of the dean and chapter of St. Paul's cathedral, London, may possibly have facilitated the exchange with a chantry in their cathedral on 16 November 1516.<sup>(181)</sup>

The sole entry of an exchange in the archdeaconry during John Longland's episcopate (1521-47) is recorded in full below, as it was somewhat unusual in that it was an exchange for a retirement pension.

Dom. Richard Ellys, priest, presented by the good lady, Anna Broughton, one sister and heiress of John Broughton, esquire, deceased, and Lord William Howard, in the right of Lady Katherine, his wife, the other sister and joint heiress of the aforesaid John Broughton, esquire, to the parish church of Grafham in the diocese of Lincoln, made vacant by the free resignation of Dom. Andrew Trace, chaplain, the last rector thereof, for the sake of an exchange by him with a certain annual pension of five marks, granted by the abbot and convent of the monastery of St. Mary the Virgin, Reading, in the diocese of Salisbury, and paid by the same monastery annually. He was admitted in person to the same at Old Temple, London, on 28 May A.D. 1532 and canonically instituted as rector in the same. He swore canonical obedience, written by the archdeacon of Huntingdon etc.<sup>(182)</sup>

Evidently, the above exchange was not made for gain, as a pension of five marks annually seems to be a poor exchange for a church which was recorded in 1526 as being worth £13 6s. 8d. <sup>(183)</sup> On the whole exchanges seem to have been genuine and not undertaken lightly. Exchanges were a means of bringing new blood into a diocese. If some clergy were

unsuited to a parish then an exchange facilitated their move to more congenial cures. Those who were tired of city life were able to exchange their churches for the country life to be found in Hertfordshire or Huntingdonshire.

The disadvantages of the exchange system meant that opportunities for preferment were denied to those who had no benefices to exchange. 'The abundance of clergy and the short supply of livings made an advowson a valuable even a marketable commodity', writes Peter Heath. (184)

Monetary considerations may have played a part in some of the exchanges between benefice holders. Rectories and vicarages varied considerably in value as the various taxation records show. Unfortunately, evidence of monetary transactions is not available in the Huntingdon records, but that there was a fairly active market in benefices, sometimes organized through brokers known as chop-churches has been shown. Their trade smacked of simony, and incurred the wrath of bishops. By the end of the sixteenth century the practice would appear to have ceased.

### **The Cost of Living**

The clergy had many calls made both on their time and on their money. In the very nature of their calling they were expected to provide hospitality whenever it was needed. Inns were few and far between, and existed, it seems, only in the largest and most important towns. In any case they were very expensive and for some too miserable. (185) Early in the fourteenth century the Commons in parliament, commenting on the non-residence of the clergy, demanded 'And that all other persons advanced to the benefices of Holy Church should remain in their said benefices in order to keep

hospitality there, on the same penalty, except the king's and clerks of the great lords of the realm'.<sup>(186)</sup>

On 16 May 1518 a visitation of the deanery of Hitchin by Bishop Atwater revealed that the vicar of Offley non seruat hospitalitatem.<sup>(187)</sup> Details of the subsidy collected <sup>(188)</sup> in the diocese in 1526 show that the vicar received £8 . His payment of synodals amounted to four shillings and he was required to pay a tenth of his income, assessed at 15s. 7d. His predecessor possibly found that his slender means did not allow him to provide hospitality. Even so we read, 'Dominus cancellarius iniunxit sibi quod citra festum sancti Michaelis seruabit hospitalitatem'.<sup>(189)</sup>

In addition the clergy had to pay dues to the bishop to cover the cost of the diocesan synod and to pay procurations to cover the cost of the archdeacon's visitations. The subsidy of 1526 shows that payments for procurations and synodals had been standardised at 11s. 6d. , but fees for the bishop's visitation were paid at different rates. The bishop's fees for visiting Flamstead were assessed at 3s. 8d. , while fees <sup>(190)</sup> for his visitation of Great Gaddesden were assessed at 16d. Visitation fees owed to the bishop cost the incumbents of Tring 10s., Puttenham 2s., Wheathampstead 6s., Therfield 6s. 3d. whereas the incumbents of the churches of Spaldwick, Everton and St. John's, Huntingdon had to pay 15d., 14d. and 16d. respectively.<sup>(191)</sup> Not all parishes named in the Subsidy were assessed for the bishop's visitations.

In addition incumbents were required to keep in good repair their rectories and vicarages. There are numerous references in the episcopal records to suitable houses to be provided for the clergy. Unfortunately, there are

few detailed descriptions of such houses in the archdeaconry. However, details have been provided of the type of house needed in 1413 for the vicar of Theddlethorp (Lincs.). It should be near the church and have one large room and two smaller ones, stables and other outbuildings, and a garden. (192) Descriptions of similar houses provided in other dioceses reveal a basic design of a hall, two solars, often with cellars, sometimes a kitchen, a grange and a stable. (193)

Possibly, the greatest burden on the clergy, and indeed on the laity, were the taxes levied by the crown. Until the late thirteenth century the church claimed a basic exemption from taxation by the state. Spiritual possessions could only be taxed by papal authority, and with the consent of the clergy. The clergy's personal property was taxed with the laity's. (194)

Until 1535 the yardstick for later taxation was the assessment ordered by pope Nicholas IV in 1291. However, there had been an earlier valuation in 1254, for which Walter Suffield, bishop of Norwich, was mainly responsible. On the pretext of a crusade, Henry III obtained from Innocent IV a grant of the tenths of the revenues of the church for three years. On 13 October 1252 at an assembly of bishops in London, he produced the papal mandate authorizing him to levy the tenth on a new and stringent valuation according to the will and decision of his servants and tax gatherers. (195) Letters were sent in the name of the bishop of Norwich to rural deans of every diocese throughout the land. In every deanery chapter the rural dean and three or four rectors took an oath to assess the benefices according to a iusta estimatio. (196) Evidently, the king was not happy with the results of the valuation as he desired a new assessment



to be made.

In 1267 the king sent his clerks into every bishopric in England to make a new assessment. Immediately afterwards all the bishops compounded with the king for their bishoprics and offered a tenth for three years on the Norwich valuation instead a tenth for the remaining two years on the new valuation. In 1269 at a meeting of the convocation of the province of Canterbury a protest was made in the name of the clergy against the intolerable burden of this last tenth. It was stated that churches which had been assessed at ten marks in the Norwich Taxation had been put up to twenty-six marks by the king's clerks, and others in proportion. It was stated that if through poverty the clergy were unable to meet the tax-gatherers' demands on the first day, they afterwards exacted the tenth on the new assessment. (197)

At the Council of Lyons in 1274 Gregory X demanded the tenths of the church, according to a verus valor, for six years for the Holy Land. He appointed M. Raymond de Nogeris, a papal chaplain, and Friar John of Darlington to act as collectors in England. The methods employed by the collectors was resented by the church and complaints were made to the pope. It was pointed out to him that no allowance had been made for the expenses incurred by the clergy in cultivating their lands and collecting their income. (198)

Benefices were assessed at their maximum value. Darlington experienced great difficulty in collecting his tenth. In 1283 Edward I seized the tenths which had been collected, but as he had not set out on a crusade as Nicholas III had required of him, the king had to give up the tenths. (199)

In 1284 Edward I negotiated again with Martin IV for a fresh grant of tenths. In return the king promised to go on crusade. After protracted negotiations with several popes Edward promised in October 1289 that he would set out on crusade within three years. Accordingly Nicholas IV consented to order the tenths for six years. It was agreed that the tenths would be collected iuxta verum valorem. On 18 March 1291 the pope appointed Oliver Sutton, bishop of Lincoln, and John of Pontoise, bishop of Winchester, to collect the tenths from 24 June, on the understanding that the king would set out on that date in 1293. The bishops of Lincoln and Winchester then sent instructions to the bishops of England and Wales to choose representative clergy to assess the verus valor of all benefices in their dioceses. (200) Assessors for the archdeaconries of Oxford, Buckingham, Bedford, Northampton and Huntingdon were M. Ralph de Bokingham (Buckingham) rector of Morton, and Richard de Appleltre, rector of Yelling (Gilling). (201) The figures given in the Taxation of Nicholas IV show an increase on those provided for the Norwich Valuation. (202)

While the Taxatio is valued for a study of parochial history, it has its limitations. Benefices not exceeding six marks were exempt from taxation if the rectors held no other living, and unless they were appropriated to religious houses; they therefore do not appear in the printed text. (203) The attitude of some to the Taxatio is given in the words of a canon of Barnwell: 'Through these assessments there are many extortions in the church; the poor are despoiled, the rich have abundance: foreigners grow wealthy, alms are withdrawn, beggars die of hunger'. (204)

The burden of taxation which fell upon incumbents became more pressing in later centuries. H.E.Salter, writing about the subsidy collected in the diocese of Lincoln in 1526, pointed out the fairness of this new valuation, largely the work of Cardinal Wolsey. The new valuation included chantries and endowed grammar schools, as well as churches and religious houses. Assistant curates and clerical pensioners, as well (205) as incumbents, paid their share too. On this occasion there were no exemptions, whereas in 1291 all livings under the value of six marks were exempt.

The rate of payment varied according to the circumstances of the case. Thus, clergy who received less than £8 annually paid one fifteenth in dues, and not one tenth. Some of the poorer religious houses paid one twentieth or one twenty-fifth. Deductions were also allowed: the cost of repairs to the parsonage house, to the chancel, and the stipend of an assistant curate, if it came out of the incumbent's stipend.

The following figures from the Berkhamstead deanery are given as examples of the new valuation. In the church of Flamstead M. John Damporly was rector and received a stipend from all sources of £33 13s. 4d. His assistant curate, M. John Benkworth, received a stipend of £6 13s. 4d. Synodals and procurations were assessed at 11s. 6d. The cost of the bishop's visitation was assessed at 3s. 8d. and repairs cost £2 13s. 4d. The rector paid a tenth of the sum remaining assessed at £2 7s. 2d. (206)

Aldenham, like Flamstead, was a rich living, and the vicar Robert Marshall received a stipend of £24 13s. 4d. out of which he paid his curate, Dom. Robert Hawkeswell, a stipend of £6 13s. 8d. The subsidy to be paid was £1 16s. 0d. (207)

Hemel Hempstead, which was also a vicarage, was assessed at £1 6s.0d. in subsidy from a stipend of £13 6s. 4d. The rector of Tring received a stipend of £69 of which £22 provided stipends for three assistant curates. After allowing £4 for repairs and 10s 0d. for an episcopal visitation he was required to pay a subsidy of £5 9s. 0d.<sup>(208)</sup>

The rector of Aldbury received a stipend of £16, but he had to provide a pension of £8 for M.Braunston. This was generous for the sixteenth century, as it was half of his stipend. A cantarist in the same parish, Thomas White, received the modest sum of £3, provided from various rents of the chantry.<sup>(209)</sup> After various outgoings were taken into account, William Wentrys or Ventris, the incumbent, paid in subsidy the sum of 12s. 7d. By 1547 the chantry in the church had been given to 'the Parson of the said Parisshe now Incumbent whos(e) name is Will(ia)m Ventris in augmentac(i)on of his lyvinge beyng an honest man and of good behaviour and of th(e)age of lxiij yeres'.<sup>(210)</sup>

Berkhampstead deanery had a number of comparatively rich livings: Berkhampstead St.Peter and Berkhampstead St.Mary (Northchurch) were each valued at £20, and both paid subsidies of 38s. 10d. <sup>(211)</sup> The rector of Wheathampstead, which was in the bishop's gift, received a stipend of £33 6s. 8d. His three assistant curates received stipends of £6 13s. 4d., £6 6s. 8d. and £4 respectively. After repairs ,procurations and synodals had been taken into account,the rector had to pay a subsidy of 45s. 11d.<sup>(212)</sup>

Later taxation under Henry VIII was more severe. All clergy were taxed at the same rate and exemptions were kept to a minimum. Clergy with incomes of less than £8 were no

longer allowed to pay one fifteenth instead of one tenth. Those who were not resident were no longer allowed to count the stipend of a curate against tax. In addition Parliament in 1534 enacted a statute by which the first year's revenue of any vacant benefice should go to the crown. (213)

For some clergy stipends had increased by 1535. For instance, the rector of Flamstead is shown in the Valor Ecclesiasticus as receiving a stipend of £41 6s. 8d., an increase of £8 6s. 8d. Hemel Hempstead showed an increase of £3 on the 1526 figure of £13 6s. 4d. while the stipend of the rector of Aldbury had increased from £16 to £20 8s. 6d. The rector of Wheathampstead's stipend had increased from £33 6s. 8d. in 1526 to £42 1s. 10d. in 1535. (214)

In some cases the Valor Ecclesiasticus showed a drop in income from a benefice since the 1526 Subsidy. In the Hertford deanery the incomes shown for the parishes of Bengoe and Stapleford were £7 8s. 6d. and £8 8s. 6d. in the Valor Ecclesiasticus, but £8 and £9 respectively in the Subsidy. (215) In the Huntingdonshire deanery of Yaxley the parishes of Elton, Botolph Bridge, Woodston, Fletton, Stanground, Stilton, Sawtry St. Andrew showed a decline in income.

While the above Huntingdonshire churches showed a decline in income, others showed a marked increase. Chesterton was valued at £12 in 1526, but at £20 8s. 4d. in 1535. (216) Glatton was valued at £9 in 1526, but at £26 18s. 8d. in 1535. The Taxatio of 1291 shows that Glatton had an income of £20. Evidently, the subsidy assessors of 1526 had made an error, or information had been withheld. It is also possible that the differences lie in the value of the glebe and its assessment. (217)

In the archdeaconry ten incumbents received under £8 in income.<sup>(218)</sup> The stipend for the vicar of Everton is recorded at £6 16s. 10d. , and the tax payable at 13s. 4d.<sup>(219)</sup> The vicar of Hartford (Hunts.) in the deanery of St.Ives was in worse case as his stipend was little more than that of an assistant curate, as the Valor shows that he received £4 11s. 8d.<sup>(220)</sup> He was still required to pay the sum of 8s. 1d. in tax. Undoubtedly, a number of clergy would have found it hard to meet their dues.

### Monastic Pensions

In addition to taxes imposed by the state, some clergy had to pay pensions to their monastic patrons. One of the earliest recorded pensions is the sum of two aurei to be paid by the rector of Warboys to the almoner of Ramsey abbey for the maintenance of the poor. This was confirmed to the almoner between 19 December 1148 and July 1160. This pension ceased on the death of the rector , Nicholas de Sigillo and his clerk, Richard. Thereafter the almoner had the church.<sup>(221)</sup>

A number of unappropriated churches were paying pensions to the abbot of Ramsey even in the sixteenth century. The Subsidy record of 1526 shows that the rectors of Elton(Aylton), Ellington,Hemingford Abbots, Houghton, Warboys and Wistow were still paying pensons of varying sums of money.<sup>(222)</sup> None of these exceeded £3 6s. 8d., the sum paid by the rector of Elton to Ramsey abbey. In addition to his pension paid to Ramsey abbey, he also paid a pension of £3 to the abbey at Peterborough.<sup>(223)</sup> While this is recorded in the Subsidy it is not recorded in the Valor Ecclesiasticus. The rector of Grafham also had to pay two pensions, 10s.to

Thorney abbey and 6s. 8d. to Huntingdon priory. Details of these are recorded in the Subsidy returns and the Valor Ecclesiasticus .(224)

### **Provision for Old Age**

When a parish priest grew old or unfit for his duties he did not normally resign his living unless he wished to enter a house of religion. Frequently he ended his days among his people, and was able still to be the friend and counsellor of those who cared to seek him. The bishop would appoint a coadjutor, whose duty it was to look after the priest and his parish and to give the sacraments. These coadjutors were usually the incumbents of small neighbouring parishes who served both cures. They took charge of clergy who needed personal care and who were unable to do their work because of old age, blindness, paralysis or even in some tragic cases, insanity. An aged, sick or blind man was always allowed to name his own colleague. (225)

Sometimes a coadjutor's care was called into question. John, rector of St. Benedict's, Huntingdon, had been coadjutor to Ivo, rector of Broughton, during his illness from which he had since died. John was examined by the dean of Huntingdon and the vicar of St. Mary's in the same town as to his care of Ivo and the administration of his affairs. He was given an honourable discharge, and the sum of five shillings and fourpence remaining from Ivo's estate was given to him for his pains. The findings of the examiners were kept among the record of wills, dated at Spaldwick 16 August 1291. (226)

M. Simon, rector of Great Munden, who was paralyzed, had M. William of Sturry(?) as his coadjutor in June 1304. (227)

Wherever possible bishops used local clergy to help an elderly and sick priest as coadjutor. Thus, on 12 April 1313 Bishop Dalderby appointed John, vicar of Bengoe as coadjutor to Henry, vicar of All Saints, Hertford, who was blind and infirm. (228)

Details of a tragic case are given in Philip Repingdon's register. On 18 March 1412/13 Thomas Tyberay, sequestrator in the archdeaconries of Huntingdon and Bedford, and the official of the archdeacon of Huntingdon made their report to the bishop concerning Adam Knaresborough, rector of Abbot's Ripton. They found that he was broken with age, infirm and blind, and unfit to exercise his office, so that the parish was without cure of souls. They advised that a coadjutor be appointed. (229)

R.Scot was appointed coadjutor by the bishop to assist and look after Adam Knaresborough who had been rector of Abbot's Ripton since 1394. However, it would seem that his ministry was not appreciated, as John Champneys was cited for obstructing the said R.Scot and preventing him from properly exercising his office. (230) Adam Knaresborough died sometime during 1416, as his successor, Thomas Smyth, was instituted on 26 July 1416. (231) Some people still caused trouble, even with a new incumbent, and earned a rebuke from the bishop for withholding the customary alms towards the maintenance of a holy-water clerk (aquebaiulus). The monition is undated, but was issued between 11 November and 21 December 1417. (232)

While some clergy needed coadjutors when they were too frail to carry out their duties, others were able to retire with a pension, and remain in their parishes. Sometimes



the pension granted was small but adequate, whereas others appear to be over-generous. The pensions were paid from the stipends of the succeeding incumbents, and varied considerably. Six pensions were granted to retiring clergy between 1460 and 1468, during John Chedworth's episcopate. William Woburn, the retiring rector of Offord Cluny, was to receive a pension of £4 sterling in four equal payments, the first to be paid on 'the feast of St. John Baptist, next after the above written date'. As the entry is dated 1 May 1460, presumably the first payment would be made on 24 June, the feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist. (233)

William Brewster, who retired from Brington in November 1461, was to receive a pension of £10 annually from his successor, M. Peter Occulshagh. The living was worth £23 in 1526. This pension is above the average granted at this time. (234) Dom. Nicholas Williams, who retired from Aldbury in 1463, received a pension of five marks, and Robert Goneeld, who retired from Little Stukeley in the same year, received a pension of forty shillings from his successor. (235) In 1468 John Gymer received a retirement pension of five marks from his successor at St. Neots. (236) Stephen Grubbe, who retired from Stanground in the same year, had to manage on a pension of forty shillings. (237) He had been vicar of Stanground for thirty-six years.

The rector of Watton at Stone was granted a pension of £5 on his retirement in March 1483. Watton would appear to be one of the richer livings in the archdeaconry, as it was valued at £20 in the Subsidy of 1526. (238) The rector of Sacombe, a neighbouring parish, would probably have found

the pension of four marks ,payable to Dom. John Skipton, from a stipend of £10, something of a burden. (239)

The number of pensions granted under William Smith, bishop of Lincoln from 1495 to 1514, increased considerably; sixteen were granted to retired incumbents in the Huntingdon archdeaconry. (240) The most generous was the pension paid to the elderly former rector of Tring, Edmund Lichfield, who was to receive the annual sum of £40. The living was valued at £69 gross in 1526. (241)

Most of the retiring clergy received more modest pensions of a third of the total gross value of the stipend. A pension of £3 0s. 4d. was granted to M.Eudo Asplond, on his retirement from Wood Walton in 1507, and was to be paid from his successor's stipend of £11 9s. 9d. (242) The retiring rector of Aspenden, Christopher Chadwick, was to receive a pension of £4 of good English money, to be paid in four equal instalments on the Feast of the Annunciation, on the Nativity of St. John Baptist, at Michaelmas and at Christmas. His successor, John Sutton, who was instituted on 22 November 1511, would have to pay it , as the record states, 'from the fruits (the income) of the church'. This was assessed at £16 in 1526. (243)

William Atwater (1514-21) sanctioned five pensions within the archdeaconry during his episcopate. None of them was over-generous, but they would have been a burden for the incumbents to bear. In 1515, M. John Long, retiring from Lilley, was granted a pension of four marks 'in good legal English money' from a stipend whose gross value was £10. (244) The retiring rector of Little Munden fared rather better, as he was to receive a pension of £5 6s. 8d. (245) In 1526 the living was valued at £22, but the new incumbent also had

to pay an assistant curate. (246)

The rector of Letchworth may have found it difficult to pay a large pension from his small stipend of £8, which is possibly why the figure is unspecified in the register. (247) The retiring rectors of Coppingford and Offord Cluny were both to receive pensions of £5 from their successors in 1516 and 1520. (248) M.Thomas Bedell was still receiving a pension from Offord Cluny in 1533, from the successor to his immediate predecessor. (249)

Twenty pensions were granted to retiring clergy during John Longland's episcopate (1521-47). (250) Some clergy appear to have been impoverished after all payments had been deducted from their stipends. In 1526 M.Thomas Bird, the vicar of Godmanchester, had to pay a pension of £8 annually to his predecessor, M.Christopher Plummer, a rent of twenty-four shillings to the king, and a stipend of £5 13s.4d. to his curate, Dom. Richard Billyngton. All these payments, together with synodals and procurations of 10s. 6d. from a stipend whose gross value was £20. This left him with a net stipend of £4 13s. 4d. (251)

On 11 December 1527 John Longland collated the church of Hitchin to M. Anthony Draycott, D.C.L. He had to pay his predecessor, M.John Levinthrop a pension of £20. (252) The gross value of the church according to the Valor Ecclesiasticus was £25 6s. 8d., but the earlier valuation, given in the Subsidy of 1526 was £20. (253) Undoubtedly, M.Draycott would have needed revenues from other sources if he were to survive.

While the above pension seems over generous, others appear to be somewhat mean. The former rector of Digswell was to receive an annual pension of ten shillings'good, legal

English money annually on the Feast of the Epiphany'. As the entry is dated 15 January 1524, he would have to wait a year for his modest pension.<sup>(254)</sup> The gross value of the stipend from Digswell was £8 6s. 8d.<sup>(255)</sup> The vicar of Willian, newly instituted on 1 July 1524, was required to pay a pension of £1 3s. 0d. to M. John Hanchet from his stipend of £17 8s. 11d. On the other hand, while the pension seems to be a poor one, the vicar also had to pay a pension of £13 6s. 8d. to the priory of Langley.<sup>(256)</sup> In 1394 Richard II had given the advowson of Willian to the prioress and convent of Dartford on condition that they appropriated it to the use of the Friars Preachers at Langley.<sup>(257)</sup> While pensions were necessary for the aged retired clergy, they sometimes imposed a great strain on parish resources, as in this case.

### **Absenteeism**

The problem of non-residence bedevilled the church throughout the ages, as a number of clergy held more than one benefice. Non-residence for the purpose of study and while a priest was in the service of the crown or some other worthy person has already been examined. Evidence of absenteeism is difficult to obtain for the twelfth to the fourteenth century. So many clergy obtained dispensations from residence that the way was open to all kinds of abuse.

The reasons given for absence from a parish were sometimes bizarre. The court book of William Alnwick (1437-1449) reveals that one incumbent, John Marshall of Hamerton, was forced to flee his parish because the local squire had instigated his serving men to attack him: he was chased into a field in a neighbouring village, beaten and wounded.<sup>(258)</sup>

On 4 November 1446 Marshall appeared in Buckden church before the bishop's commissary, Leek, to answer a charge of absenteeism a longo tempore without cause. He pleaded guilty, and alleged fear as his reason. Evidently, his plea was unacceptable, as he failed to prove his case, and he was admonished to reside in his living and minister in person. (259)

No reason was given for the absence of Dom. Robert Sturman, rector of Berkhamstead St. Peter, for two years. He was in residence at the time of Alnwick's court, but it was reported that he did not provide hospitality and appeared to have an illicit relationship with Joanna Durant, which he steadfastly denied. (260)

Dom. Richard Edous, rector of the church of Offord D'Arcy, was noted as having been absent from his church for a long time without cause, to the miserable neglect of the souls of his parishioners. On 14 February 1446 in London Bishop William ordered him to take up residence within his parish within a period of two months from the day of this warning under pain of deprivation. (261) It later appeared that the said Richard Edous propter ipsius multiplicatas contumacias &c. received a sentence of excommunication. Apparently, he had been living at Brampton, within a few miles of his own church. (262)

Dom. Roger Bill, rector of Aspenden, had also been negligent, as he had not celebrated Mass in his church on ferial days, or on certain saints' days and had also absented himself from divine service. (263) A long list of his faults and failings were presented to the bishop's commissary, M. John Leek. No date is recorded, but from previous records the latter part of 1446 is indicated. Among Roger Bill's many misdemeanours was his selling the lead from the chancel

roof for the sum of 16 marks 6s. 8d., and re-roofing it with tiles.<sup>(264)</sup> His fate is not known. It is possible that he was suspended like the unfortunate vicar of Bengoe, on 19 September 1448, as he had absented himself from his church in order to serve the cure of the church of Munden.<sup>(265)</sup> Dom. Nicholas Boney, rector of Ayot Mountfitchet, gave no reason for his absence from his parish for five years. The matter was made known in London on 5 November 1444, but no punishment appears to have been recorded.<sup>(266)</sup>

The sixteenth century was no better than the previous century for its numbers of absentee clergy. Fortunately, we have the visitation records of bishops Atwater and Longland from 1518 to 1531 which give a clear picture of some absentee clergy and the effects of absenteeism on their parishes. Atwater's commissary, M. John Grene, carried out a visitation on 8 June 1518 in Kimbolton parish church.<sup>(267)</sup> Unfortunately, only seventeen parish churches are recorded as having made reports. Seven other churches, namely, Buckworth, Covington, Brampton, Buckden, Leighton Bromswold, Spaldwick and Stow Longa were omitted from the Leightonstone deanery visitation. The rectors of Ellington, Brington, Grafham, Hamerton, Thurning, Swineshead and Keyston are all described as non-resident. In addition, two vicars who had an obligation to reside were absent from their respective parishes of Alconbury and Winwick.

Although the vicar of Alconbury is described as non-resident, it is possible that he was away for a short time. He officiated at the Easter communion, but he was so slow in communicating his parishioners as to earn their displeasure.<sup>(268)</sup> The vicar of Winwick had not resided for four years. He was

John Parson who had been instituted by Bishop William Smith on 4 January 1505. He was incumbent there when the subsidy was collected in 1526.<sup>(269)</sup> No reasons are given for the continued absence of the rest of the incumbents. However, it was known that the non-resident rector of Ellington, M. William Stanley, was also a fellow of St. John's college, Cambridge, and probably spent his time there.<sup>(270)</sup> The subsidy record shows that there was an assistant curate in the parish and in all the other parishes from which the incumbents were absent.<sup>(271)</sup>

On 9 June 1518 M. John Grene carried out a visitation of the Yaxley deanery where replies appear to have been more satisfactory. Three rectors only were non-resident: the incumbents of Elton, Orton Longueville and Wood Walton.<sup>(272)</sup> Dr. Burnett was the rector of Elton, and had assistants in 1526. However, in 1518 his church was in need of repair: the vestry was ruinosus, and the tester above the rood in the nave is described as defectiua.<sup>(273)</sup>

The rector of Orton Longueville, apart from being absent from his parish, was reported as having refused the sacrament to the wives of Henry Herrings and Christopher Huetson, although he denied it.<sup>(274)</sup> Even though he was described as being non-resident, the parish appears to have been in good order, although there would appear to be some friction.

The rector of Wood Walton also held the benefice of Lutton in Northampton archdeaconry, which was no great distance from Wood Walton. Apart from a few repairs needed to the nave windows, there were no complaints. There is no evidence that the parish was being neglected, because the incumbent was living at Lutton.<sup>(275)</sup>

The visitation carried out in the St. Ives deanery revealed that two rectors only were non-resident: Robert Wicham, rector of King's Ripton and vicar of Hemingford Grey, but resident in neither parish, and John Galer, rector of Broughton who resides in another parish.<sup>(276)</sup> This does not necessarily mean that this man was a pluralist, but merely in charge of two small parishes which he quite easily managed. The report on Broughton says that omnia bene.

The deanery of Huntingdon was visited on 13 June 1518 by Bishop Atwater. There were six churches and one hospital in the deanery, but only three reports were presented. These were very uninformative. It was reported concerning the church of St. Mary, Huntingdon that M. Cungarton had left a house in his will to the church and that M. Halle had it in his hands. At Huntingdon St. Benedict the report was omnia bene. Although All Saints, Huntingdon is listed, there was no report given. At St. John's, Huntingdon it was reported that Richard Parker, after much ill use of her, was going to marry Joan Darby. Details of the state of the churches and the clergy are wanting.<sup>(277)</sup>

A thorough report was given concerning the deanery of St. Neots on 22 May 1518. The only church omitted from the visitation was Waresley. There were two non-resident priests. The rector of Offord Cluny was not only non-resident, but was unknown to his parishioners. It is no surprise to read also that the rectory was in a very dilapidated state and that the chancel was defectivus.<sup>(278)</sup> Southoe had a non-resident vicar, but no more details are available concerning the church.<sup>(279)</sup>

The visitation records for the Hertfordshire deaneries



made in 1518 by Atwater's commissaries show that three rectors and one vicar were non-resident in the Berkhamstead deanery, seven rectors and one vicar in the Baldock deanery, and two rectors in the Hertford deanery and Hitchin deanery respectively were absent.<sup>(280)</sup> The reasons for their absence were many and various. N. Robert Marshall, vicar of Aldenham, was also provost of the college of Hemingborough, Yorkshire. The rector of Puttenham, in the same deanery of Berkhamstead, was also parish chaplain at Hackney in the diocese of London, while the vicar of Little Gaddesden lived at Oakley.<sup>(281)</sup>

Baldock deanery had the worst record for absenteeism: seven rectors and one vicar were recorded as being non-resident. However, it does not follow that all of them were negligent. For instance, the rector of Westmill, although absent from his parish, seems to have left everything in good order, as the words omnia bene are used to describe it.<sup>(282)</sup>

The patrons of Ashwell were the abbot and convent of Westminster who appear to have cared little for their appropriated church. The vicar in 1518 was non-resident, and both the chancel and the vicarage were dilapidated. The curate who was supposed to serve the church in the absence of the vicar was Thomas Bagthwayte, who was also the vicar of two churches, Mitcham in the diocese of Winchester, and Canewdon in the diocese of London. He was clearly not in any way interested in working at Ashwell, and had let the vicarage to a layman. The chancel and vicarage were both dilapidated. Bagthwayte was cited to appear before the vicar-general at Hertford. The incumbent was M. James Denton who was also almoner to the queen of France, and almost

certainly was unaware of the state of affairs in his church.

The rector of Wallington was also non-resident, but his church is described as cetera bene. No reasons for his absence were given. (284) No reasons were given for the absenteeism of the rector of St. Andrew, Hertford or for the absence of the rector of Welwyn. While St. Andrew's church was said to be in good order, Welwyn church was somewhat neglected, as both the chancel and the rectory were said to be in a ruinous state. (285)

The only complete return was made in the deanery of Hitchin. There are entries for fourteen churches, two of which had non-resident rectors. M. Hugh Ellys was the non-resident rector of Lilley. No reason was given for his absence. However, the non-resident rector of Letchworth, Joseph Stepney, had a licence of non-residence for two years study. (286) There appears to be a difference of opinion here, as Stepney was cited to appear before the bishop on the grounds that he was a non-resident without permission and had left his cure without a licence. (287) The incumbent of Ickleford is described in Atwater's visitation as having leased his church to a layman without a licence, yet he appears not to have been called to account. (288) There is evident neglect, as the windows in the nave were broken and the chancel had no lead roofing. (289)

The effects of absenteeism and non-residence on the life and work of the Church are complex. While a number of clergy had good reasons to be absent from their parishes, others provided no excuse. The visitation records have shown that a number of churches with non-resident incumbents were allowed to fall into disrepair. Fifteen churches were listed

(290)  
in the 1518 visitation records as being in need of repair.  
Chancels in particular were noted for their ruinous state.  
Such repairs were needed at Ashwell, Brington, Grafham,  
Alconbury, Thurning, Swineshead, Keyston, Elton, Ellington,  
Wood Walton, Ripton Regis , Welwyn, Lilley, Offord Cluny,  
and Radwell. The vicarages at Alconbury and the rectories  
at King's Ripton, Little Gaddesden, Welwyn and Offord Cluny  
were also in a state of disrepair. (291)

The chancel was the rector's responsibility, so the  
duties of rebuilding and repair devolved upon him. Where  
a church had been appropriated then the burden of repair fell  
upon the monastic rector or other corporation. Ashwell was  
a vicarage in the patronage of the abbot and convent of  
Westminster who had appropriated the living during Robert  
Grosseteste's episcopate, yet they allowed both the chancel  
and the vicarage to fall into decay. (292)

Later visitations carried out by Bishop John Longland's  
commissaries show that many of the defects had not been  
remedied. The non-resident rector of Little Gaddesden ,who  
lived at Oakley, in Clapham deanery, had done nothing to repair  
the ruinous chancel. He was ordered to have the repairs  
carried out before next Michaelmas. (293) At Aldenham the  
vicar was still non-resident: indeed he had been absent for  
ten years , and the chancel was described as multum ruinosus.  
The patrons were the abbot and convent of St. Albans. (294) At  
Ashwell matters seem to have become worse: the chancel was  
in such a state of disrepair that the rain was falling on to  
the altar below. The vicar had not preached for ten years,  
it was reported. (295)

Non-residence or absenteeism undoubtedly placed added

burdens on the local churches, particularly if those left to serve cures were inadequate or negligent, as in the case of the notorious Thomas Bagthwayte, cited above. Yet the system was necessary or at least inevitable because of the concentration of so much of the national wealth in the revenues of parochial benefices, and so high a proportion of intellectual talent amongst the clergy. As C.J. Godfrey has pointed out, 'Wycliffe, it may be remembered, could scarcely have done his work in the world without being a non-resident incumbent'. (296)

### Pluralism

The dangers of pluralism had been recognized early in the history of the Church. The tenth canon of the council of Chalcedon in 451, forbade clerks to hold offices in the church of more than one city at a time. (297) Gregory the Great (590-604) in a pastoral letter, included in the twelfth-century Decretum of Gratian, ordered that 'the several offices of ecclesiastical law be entrusted singly, each to a separate person'. (298)

A further prohibition was contained in the fifteenth canon of the council, held at Nicaea in 787 which Gratian quoted, 'From the present time a clerk may not be reckoned in two churches at once...'. However, the council made an exception to the rule in the words, 'But in the towns which are without (outside the city) let some indulgence be made on account of the poverty of men'. (299)

This exception referred to the country towns or villages outside the episcopal cities in which, since the council of Chalcedon, Christianity had spread. As A.H. Thompson says,

the stipends of clergy depended on the alms of the faithful. In country places , such offerings might be scanty and insufficient, so that in order to survive, it might be (300) necessary to allow one man to serve more than one church. This was the legitimate excuse for pluralism which encouraged its growth.

Despite papal opposition to pluralism , seen in canon 14 of the Lateran council, held in 1179, and in canon 29 of the fourth Lateran council of 1215 , the abuse continued. The latter council probably made matters worse, albeit unwittingly, in the words, ' Nevertheless as regards noble and lettered persons, who ought to be honoured with larger benefices, there shall be power of dispensation by the apostolic see, whenever reason shall require'. (301)

In 1317 John XXII in his famous constitution Execrabilis deplored the fact that a single man, often inadequate and scarcely able to fill one office, claimed the salaries of a great many. The pope complained that the cure of souls was being neglected , and that by decree he would in future confine the holders of pluralities by dispensation to a single benefice with cure of souls, which may be held together with a sinecure benefice. Holders of pluralities were required to resign them after choosing which they preferred. All who held several benefices without dispensation were bound to resign all but the last which they had received. All benefices ipso jure vacant or resigned were reserved by the pope for his own disposal. (302)

In the autumn of 1362 Guillaume de Grimoard became pope Urban V, and soon afterwards issued a bull Horribilis, in which, like his predecessors, he condemned the greed which

perverts the hearts of pluraliasts. He contrasted these men with the countless prudent and learned clerks, in the schools and elsewhere, unbeneficed, and so poor that their very studies were in danger. (303)

Three years later there followed the constitution Consueta published at Avignon on 4 May 1366. After the usual pious preamble, the constitution went on to say that within one month all pluralists were to declare their benefices, whether actual or expectative, to the bishop of the diocese in which they were dwelling at the time. The values according to the 1291 papal assessment were to be stated. At the expiry of the month (extended to six months in the case of England) all pluralists were to be reduced to the possession of one benefice with cure of souls plus one compatible benefice, at the incumbent's choice. On the receipt of these returns, the bishops had to forward them to their metropolitan. (304)

During November the returns were received from the bishops by the archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Langham. Seventy-two were returned for the diocese of Lincoln. Twenty-one pluralists held livings within the archdeaconry at this time. (305) Holywell (Hunts.), worth 20 marks, was reserved by the pope for Walter Aldeby, a scholar of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He was also prebendary of Bathwick in Wells. There is no record of his institution to Holywell. (306)

M. William Askeby was chancellor of the exchequer and archdeacon of Northampton. He also held the church of Glatton, and on 13 July was instituted to Southoe, but appears to have resigned before 9 September 1349. At some time he resumed possession of Southoe, as on 31 October 1355 he is

recorded as having exchanged the church for Harrington (Northants.)<sup>(307)</sup> M. John Briene or Brian was well-connected with a family well-known in the west of England, but had a life full of litigation in endeavouring to hold on to his many benefices. He had a grant from the crown of the deacon prebend of Torleton in Salisbury on 25 July 1343, and was presented to Bledlow(Bucks.) on 29 October following. He was instituted to Hatfield(Herts.) on 30 August 1349. He had a dispensation to hold Bledlow. On 28 September 1349 he was granted the prebend of Westbury in Worcester cathedral.

He obtained provision of the deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin on 7 August 1350, at the petition of his brother Sir Guy. As if that were not enough, he accepted the prebend of St. Mary's altar in Beverley in 1351, but there is no indication that he obtained possession. Numerous other appointments followed. In the course of 1353 he exchanged the deanery for the prebend of Lusk II in Dublin, which was provided to him, at the request of Guy, lord Brian on 30 August. His tenure of the deanery of Dublin meant that he had to resign either Bledlow or Hatfield, as he had no dispensation for three benefices with cure of souls. He resigned Bledlow, but having now exchanged his cure in Dublin for a sinecure was presented anew to Bledlow by the crown and was instituted 15 December 1353. He had further appointments which led to disputes. His brother, who was bishop of Worcester, collated the church of Bishop's Cleeve to him on 15 March 1360-1; but the church, then vacant, was disputed by Richard Drayton. The suit was brought before the Curia, and Drayton, who was supported by the prince and princess of Wales, won his case. Their petition was granted

22 January 1365-6: it appealed to pope Urban's detestation of plurality, especially of incompatible benefices, and sentence of deprivation was pronounced upon Brian. However, he received a crown presentation to Cleeve on 22 February 1372-3. He continued to exchange his various benefices for more lucrative ones until his death in 1388-9.<sup>(308)</sup> The career of Brian has been given at length as an example of the advantages of being well-connected and at the same time of a man seemingly possessed by greed. A list of the other pluralists at this time is given in the appendix.VIII.

The effects both of absenteeism and pluralism were minimised when the deputy appointed to serve the cure was efficient. However, as was shown in the previous chapter, curates were sometimes unsupervised and occasionally lax. It was seen that the number of offences committed by assistants was very low, and there was no evidence to show that they were incontinent or that there was a general decline in standards. The evidence does show that often rectors who were responsible often for chancel repairs were failing in their duty.

C.J.Godfrey makes the point that it would be futile to pass judgement on the medieval system of pluralism according to the standards of today. Although some pluralists were covetous and possibly indolent, there were doubtless many who were hard-working.<sup>(309)</sup> Yet there were the occasional 'pure pluralists' who could argue no mitigating circumstances in their favour. They benefited themselves and a single parish at the expense of another. They owed their dispensations to the status which their birth and education gave them, as was shown in the example cited above.



## Celibacy

In addition to being good stewards and pastors it was required of the clergy that they be celibate. In the eleventh-century the problem of married clergy had given cause for concern. The Norman bishops, especially Archbishop Lanfranc, a decade after the Conquest, while making it clear that in future no priest was to marry, allowed that those clergy who were already married might continue in that state.<sup>(310)</sup> Lanfranc's canon in the primatial council at Winchester in 1076 was too humane for his successors who saw matters in a different light.

On 29 September 1102 Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, held a solemn council at Westminster. In his canon on celibacy he went much further than his predecessor. Wives were absolutely forbidden to clergy, who were required to abandon the wives they already had. Sub-deacons too were now to make a vow of chastity at their ordination. A married priest was forbidden to say Mass. If he ventured to do so, no one was to listen to him, and he was moreover to be deprived of all privileges. Finally, the sons of priests were not to succeed to their fathers' benefices.<sup>(311)</sup>

The imposition of celibacy met with limited success as some clergy still had their women or focarie. Gerald of Wales agreed with his old tutor in Paris, Master Peter Comestor, when he said that 'the ancient enemy has never deceived God's Church in any area so much as he has in this vow of celibacy'.<sup>(312)</sup> No evidence is available for the observance of Anselm's canons during the twelfth century, although it is believed that they were openly flouted. However, the thirteenth-century bishops endeavoured to

enforce this rule of celibacy with a certain amount of success.

In 1222 the provincial Council of Oxford, under the leadership of Archbishop Stephen Langton, stressed the seriousness of disobedience to the Church's rule on celibacy. Canon 34 enacted that if beneficed men or men in Holy Orders should presume to retain their partners publicly in their dwelling houses or should elsewhere have public access to them to the public scandal, they should be coerced by the withdrawal of their benefices. The clergy might not leave such partners anything in their wills. Wives also who do not leave their (clerical) partners should be excluded from the sacraments and the church; if that did not suffice, they should be stricken with the sword of excommunication; and, lastly the secular arm should be invoked against them (et tunc demum contra eas invocetur brachium seculare).<sup>(313)</sup>

The effects of this decree and of earlier decrees may be seen in the registers of the thirteenth-century bishops. Fortunately, the earliest registers we have are found in the diocese of Lincoln. Several cases of the flouting of the canons of 1222 may be found in the register of Hugh of Wells, bishop of Lincoln from 1209 to 1235. Although most of those who offended appear to have come from other archdeaconries, two cases are cited as examples. Richard of Newenham, parson of Sandy (Beds.) in 1219 undertook to pay fifteen marks if he should cohabit with a woman he is said to have married. If this should happen, the archdeacon is to report it by letter to the bishop.<sup>(314)</sup> Alan, vicar of Ashwell (Rutland), who had been presented by a lay patron in 1219, was obliged to execute a bond undertaking to pay thirty marks if he

again cohabit with his former mistress, Annora. (315)

Grosseteste, in his Constitutions addressed to the rectors, vicars and parish priests of his diocese, followed his predecessor in his attitude towards the Church's teaching on celibacy. The lives of the clergy are to be pure and anyone in holy orders may not marry, nor hold an ecclesiastical benefice nor presume to minister in holy orders if afterwards he has married. (316)

On the whole the clergy of the diocese seem to have been fairly law-abiding concerning the rules on celibacy, as the references are few, and I have found none for the clergy of the Huntingdon archdeaconry <sup>in the thirteenth century</sup>. Throughout the thirteenth century attempts were made to enforce the Church's rule on celibacy. How far patrons were aware of their presentee's state is not known. It is possible that they turned a blind eye to those who were married, and only the evidence of fellow clergy or possibly parishioners would make it known to the bishop. Throughout the century the rule of the Church on celibacy was emphasised again and again in synod and council. All the preceding legislation against married clergy was reiterated in Cardinal Ottobuono's legatine council in 1265 at London or Westminster. (317)

Archbishop Pecham, in his Provincial council in 1279 at Reading, also referred to Ottobuono's canon contra concubenarios, and he ordered that archdeacons should read it at their visitations and see that it be read by the rural deans at their chapters. (318)

The legislation is itself a witness to the existence of the practices which it tried to suppress. There is no

doubt that some of the clergy of the diocese were married men and others lived openly with their wives in their dwelling houses and refused to give them up in spite of repeated synodical decrees. Those clergy who were not married probably turned a blind eye to those who were. The records reveal comparatively few cases of wholesale disobedience in this matter. but this could of course be an argument from silence.

References to focarie are few and far between in the memoranda of Lincoln's fourteenth-century bishops, and fifteenth-century records are more general. For instance, Bishop Repingdon (1405-19) was content to issue general admonitions against clerical negligence, immorality, irreverence and other abuses.<sup>(319)</sup> More detailed evidence is available in Bishop Alnwick's Court Book of 1446-49. Here several instances of clerical incontinence are given. Among them is the crime of adultery on the part of Dom. Robert Sturman, rector of Berkhamstead St. Peter with Joan Durant, the wife of William Durant. This was constantly denied by Sturman before the bishop's registrar at Nettleham. He has to purge himself of this charge before the feast of St. Luke (18 October), 1447.<sup>(320)</sup>

On 16 September 1446 Robert Fenton, vicar of the prebendal church of Buckden, appeared before the bishop on a similar charge of adultery with one of his parishioners, Agnes, the wife of Robert Lokyngton. However, he purged himself, and the charge was dismissed.<sup>(321)</sup>

The above are just two examples of clerical misbehaviour which appear not to have been proved. Only eight cases occur with reference to the Huntingdon archdeaconry over a period

of six years, the percentage of clergy involved in any given year would be insignificant. Hamilton Thompson warns against building untenable theories on such evidence.<sup>(322)</sup>

However, the sixteenth-century visitations of Bishops Atwater and Longland made between 1517 and 1531 reveal that the presence of women in rectories and vicarages was a subject of common enquiry. It was of course necessary for a parish priest to have a female servant to act as house-keeper. While a few clergy had their mothers or their sisters to look after them, others had women in their houses of whom it is not stated whether or not any suspicion was entertained.

Incontinence would seem to have been confined chiefly to assistants. It was recorded of Dom. Robert Lacy, curate of Aldenham, that he had in his house two women who were said to be suspect. The visitation was carried out on 25 April 1518, but by that time Lacy had fled the country.<sup>(323)</sup> A lesser person, William Smyth, described as aquabaiulus or water-carrier was suspectus cum uxore Johannis Stringer in the parish of Abbotsley.<sup>(324)</sup> The episcopal court book for 1514-20 states that Smyth ceased misbehaving or left as soon as he had been found out (recessit immediate post deteccionem).<sup>(325)</sup>

A single charge was brought against the rector of Aston who was accused of having two women in his house. He was ordered by the bishop to remove them on the day the charge was made (6 May, 1518).<sup>(326)</sup> The bishop's speedy action met with little success; in October there was still some doubt whether the rector, Alexander Trodes, had obeyed the bishop.<sup>(327)</sup>

The visitation records of Bishop Longland made in 1530 show that celibacy presented a problem for some clergy, but not it would appear for the clergy of the Huntingdon arch-deaconry on this occasion. While there are several entries concerning the incontinence of the laity, there is none for the clergy. On the whole, while there were isolated cases of incontinency among the clergy throughout the diocese, there does not appear to have been a wholesale rejection of the vow of celibacy.

### **Assistant Clergy**

Hitherto this study has been concerned largely with the rectors and vicars within the parishes of the Huntingdon archdeaconry; apart from them there was the greater number of unbeneficed clergy who assisted in the parishes. Our knowledge of them is very limited. In his synodal statutes of 1238 Robert Grosseteste declared that 'in every church where funds permit there shall be a deacon and subdeacon to minister therein as is fitting: in other churches there must be at least one adequate and suitable clerk who properly attired shall assist in the divine office'.<sup>(328)</sup>

Little is known of this great number of clergy who far outnumbered those who were beneficed. Undoubtedly, some assisted in neighbouring chapels dependent on their mother churches. From Hugh of Wells' Liber Antiquus de Ordinationibus Vicariarum of 1218 it is known that the vicar of St. Mary's, Huntingdon had a clerk and a boy to assist him.<sup>(329)</sup> Hitchin is described in the same document as having duo capellani necessarii.<sup>(330)</sup>

Bishop Gravesend (1258-79), like his predecessors, was concerned about ministry to people who lived in rural

communities away from their parish churches. In ordaining vicarages, his decrees provided specifically for the maintenance of chaplains, to be provided by the vicars, in the chapels of hamlets dependent upon parish churches. In ordaining a vicarage in the church of Great Paxton, Gravesend provided for the dependent chapels of Little Paxton and Toseland to be served by suitable ministers (per ministros ydoneos). (331)

From the thirteenth-century ordination lists of Oliver Sutton the names of some of the unbeneficed clergy are known and who provided them with titles. A number bore local toponyms and were provided with titles by religious houses within the archdeaconry: Hugh le Dispenser of Abbotsley had a title from St. Neots Priory, Walter of Clothall had a title from Wymondley Priory and Richard of Conington received a title from Hertford Priory. (332)

Titles might be given for one order only, for instance, the subdiaconate. Then the ordinand had to apply again to the same religious house who had sponsored him, before proceeding to higher orders. Sometimes titles were given ad omnes, covering all orders which the candidate had not yet received. Thus, Thomas son of Richard of Huntingdon was ordained subdeacon on 23 September 1290 with a title from St. John's Hospital, Huntingdon. On 22 September 1291 he had a title from his original sponsors for all holy orders. (333)

Other unbeneficed clergy were ordained to titles of patrimony or pensions. These varied in value from two marks to ten marks. Ralph of Stanton was ordained on the title of his patrimony in the vill of Hemingford and Yelling which was estimated at ten marks, by testimony of the arch-

deacon of Huntingdon .<sup>(334)</sup> William of Godmanchester was ordained to a title of his patrimony of sixty shillings. Later ordinations describe him as William son of Thomas of Godmanchester and as son of Thomas Balle of Godmanchester.<sup>(335)</sup>

Simon Townley has pointed out that in theory the sum of sixty shillings guaranteed a respectable although not a luxurious standard of living.<sup>(336)</sup> He points out that skilled craftsmen such as carpenters would earn about three pence a day without food. Allowing 250 working days a year the annual sum would be sixty-two shillings. However, a lay craftsman would probably have a family to support, whereas a cleric would be celibate and have no such burdens.<sup>(337)</sup> Some unbeneficed clergy had to manage on less: Alexander of Swineshead was ordained on the title of his patrimony of thirty-five shillings and more.<sup>(338)</sup>

Those with poor patrimonies could only hope for casual work as mass priests or acting as scribes, or if they were very fortunate as stipendiary assistants, or later as chantry priests. Others would have been employed as parish chaplains, or curates for a small stipend. Hamilton Thompson has pointed out that the term parish priest was used exclusively of this type of chaplain. He was the parish priest whose name so often occurs among the witnesses to last wills and testaments.<sup>(339)</sup>

The names of those at the beginning of their ministry are given in the clerical poll -tax returns for 1381. At Offord D'Arcy Thomas Tygges and William Waren had received their first tonsure only.<sup>(340)</sup> Two brothers appear to be serving the parish of Orton Waterville, both unbeneficed. John Cope is a priest and Robert Cope is described as an



accolyte.<sup>(341)</sup> Henry Grace, also described as an accolyte, is the only assistant in the parish of Woodston in the deanery of Yaxley.<sup>(342)</sup> Unfortunately, the clerical poll-tax returns for 1379 and 1381 are incomplete, as only fragments of the manuscripts have survived. Some of the fragments cover several deaneries in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon and provide some details of the numbers of assistant clergy serving in the parishes at this time.

The deanery of Berkhamstead has returns for 1379 and 1381. There were fifteen incumbents ( rectors and vicars) and twenty-nine assistant clergy working in the deanery in<sup>(343)</sup> 1379. The larger parishes were well served: St. Peter, Great Berkhamstead had a rector, Thomas Somenour de Lughton, and seven assistant priests. Two of these, John and Thomas were chaplains of the chapel of St. Thomas and the chapel of St. John Baptist respectively. Tring had a rector, John Ludham, and five assistant clergy, of whom John is described as a parochial chaplain, and Hugh as chaplain of Merston.<sup>(344)</sup> Wheathampstead was served by a rector, Richard Claymund, and four chaplains, one of whom is described as a parochial chaplain, and a clerk, Thomas atte Feld.<sup>(345)</sup>

The parishes of St. Mary, Great Berkhamstead, Great Gaddesden, North Mimms, Shenley and Hemel Hempstead were each served by an incumbent and two assistant clergy. Aldbury, Flamstead, and Aldenham each had an incumbent and one assistant. Puttenham, Little Gaddesden, Kensworth and King's Langley each had no assistant priests.<sup>(346)</sup>

Twelve churches are recorded for Hitchin deanery, with eleven incumbents. King's Walden had a chaplain who is not described as the vicar. There could of course have been a

vacancy in the benefice at this time. Seven churches had assistant clergy. Hitchin had the greatest number. The vicar was assisted by three chaplains and two clerks , together with Bro. Thomas de Novo Wyggyng and Bro. Robert Robert(sic). The chapels of Great Wymondley and Dinsley (347) were served by the clergy of the parish church. Kimpton was served by its vicar, Thomas Cartere, and three chaplains and two clerks. Stevenage had William Tankerville as rector and one chaplain and two clerks. The parishes of Letchworth, Graveley, Knebworth, Offley and St. Ippollitts apart from their incumbents each had one assistant priest. In addition Graveley had a clerk. Lilley and Chesfield had no assistant clergy. (348)

The only other deanery returns which survived for 1379 are those for Huntingdon, with details of the churches in the town of Huntingdon, namely, St. Mary, St. Benedict, All Saints, St. John and St. Andrew together with the church of Brampton and the Hospital of St. John Baptist. Brampton had a large staff, with a vicar with six chaplains and seven clerks. St. John's, Huntingdon had a rector , assisted by two chaplains, William Clife, notary, and a clerk. The (349) remaining churches each had an incumbent and assistant.

The returns for 1381 are available for Hitchin deanery, Baldock deanery, Berkhamstead deanery and part of the deaneries of St. Neots( two parishes) and Yaxley. The churches of Hitchin, Letchworth and Knebworth are missing from the Hitchin deanery returns, but the church of Pirton has been included. Offley and Stevenage each have two assistant clergy and Kimpton has one assistant. The remaining churches have only their respective incumbents.

How accurate the 1381 figures are is a matter for debate.

They show that the assistant clergy must have been very mobile. Kimpton suffered a loss of three chaplains and one clerk, and Stevenage had lost its two clerks, but still had the services of John Maidelove, now described as parish priest.<sup>(351)</sup>

The Berkhamstead deanery figures include Letchworth, but Bovingdon and Long Marston are listed separately. In the 1379 returns they were included under Hemel Hempstead and Tring respectively. Apart from these differences the figures show little change. St.Peter's, Great Berkhamstead still had a large staff of assistants, and showed an increase of three. One of the new members of staff, William, is described as 'celebrant in the castle'. Berkhamstead St.Mary had lost one of its chaplains, and Tring had also lost one. Wheathampstead, which had four chaplains and one clerk in 1379, had three priests, of whom one is described as 'priest of Harpenden' in 1381. Aldbury and Flamstead had each gained a chaplain. Kensworth is described as having<sup>(352)</sup> both a rector and a vicar.

No comparative figures are available for the deaneries of St.Neots, Yaxley or Huntingdon. Eight churches are recorded for Yaxley deanery. Water Newton was alone in having no assistant priest. Orton Waterville had a staff of four, including the rector and an acolyte. Ellington had three assistants in 1381. In the deanery of St.Neots the church of Offord D'Arcy had a staff of four and two others who are described as having had their first tonsure. Abbotsley had two assistants of whom one was an acolyte.<sup>(353)</sup> A solitary name appears at the top of the entry for St.Neots deanery

that of Thomas Bolle, who could have been the rural dean.  
No other description is given.

The remaining deanery included in the 1381 returns is Baldock. Twelve parishes are listed, each having an incumbent. Baldock, as one of the larger and less rural parishes, had three assistant priests, one of whom is described as 'master of Baldock Hospital'.<sup>(354)</sup> Ashwell's vicar, Walter Langham, had a staff of six assistant clergy, one of whom is described as 'priest of St. Mary'. Therfield also had a larger staff than most of the parishes in the deanery. The rector was assisted by three priests, one of whom was master of Royston Hospital. The parishes of Hinxworth, Bygrave, Wallington, and Clothall had one assistant each, while the parish of Kelshall had M. William Flaynburgh as rector and William as parochial chaplain.<sup>(355)</sup> Rushden, Radwell, Caldecote and Sandon had no assistants.

The income for the unbeneficed assistants came not from endowments, but from wages, and these might be paid on a yearly basis, but a number were probably on 'short-term' contracts. This may account for the differences in the numbers of assistants serving in 1381. The parochial chaplains referred to in some of the records were the substitutes for incumbents who were unwilling or unable to serve the cure themselves, possibly through non-residence, infirmity, insufficiency of orders, or absence while studying.

Valuable information concerning the unbeneficed clergy and their stipends is provided in the Lincoln diocesan subsidy returns of 1526. These records are more comprehensive than the poll tax returns of 1379 and 1381.

They provide details of stipends which were lacking in the early clerical poll-tax returns. Stipends ranged from £3, paid to Thomas White, a chantry priest at Aldbury in the Berkhamstead deanery, to £8, paid to two assistant priests at Tring. There were 149 assistant clergy working in the archdeaconry. (356)

In 1379 Berkhamstead deanery had thirty-two assistant clergy working in the churches, and twenty-nine in 1381. In 1526 there is a marked decline in the number of assistants working in the deanery. There were fourteen incumbents, three stipendiary curates serving the chapels of Bovington, Flaunden and Harpenden, and seventeen assistant curates. Whereas the large parish of St. Peter, Great Berkhamstead, had a staff of ten in 1381, by 1526 it had been reduced to two cantarists. Whereas Wheathampstead, which had a staff of three assistants in 1381, had the same number in 1526. Tring also had three assistants, as in 1381. (357)

The deanery of Hitchin showed few changes. The town church of Hitchin still had a large staff of four priests to assist the rector. Stevenage still had a staff of two assistant priests, as it had in 1381. (358)

In the clerical poll-tax returns for 1381 for the deanery of Baldock twelve churches were listed as compared with twenty-five for 1526, it is therefore difficult to make a fair comparison concerning manpower. However, individual churches are considered. In 1381 the town of Baldock had a rector and three assistants; but in 1526 there was a rector and five stipendiary curates. (359) Ashwell still retained a large staff in 1526: there were four assistants, one of whom is described as a cantarist. Ashwell is remarkable in

that three of the assistants possessed the degree of magister. Therfield which had three assistant clergy in 1381, had the same number in 1526. A total of twenty-four assistant clergy served in the deanery compared with seventeen who served eight churches in the same deanery in 1381.(360)

The churches of Sandon, Rushden, Throcking, Ardleigh, and Caldecote were without assistants. The stipends of the incumbents ranged from £8 to £13, so it is possible that they could not afford in some cases to pay a reasonable stipend to an assistant. Most of the assistants would never obtain a proper benefice, and so were dependent for their survival on less secure forms of income. Thus, a friendly patron was important to an aspiring cleric. Opportunities for obtaining a benefice were reduced when a number of pluralists occupied more than one church. A number of priests would always remain in subordinate positions. Some would become for a time chantry chaplains, and others would have such posts just for a year as anniversary chaplains. The way to a benefice was long and hard, and some never achieved their hopes. Yet without these assistants, the learned would not have been able to occupy high positions or serve their diocese as archdeacons, canons, prebendaries or deans.

#### **Chantries and Cantarists**

A number of assistant clergy, as was shown, served in chapels attached to larger parishes, while others were employed in chantries, sometimes in private houses, as the charter rolls of Hugh of Wells show. A chantry originally meant any service performed by a private chaplain. After the middle of the fourteenth century the term chantry was

reserved exclusively for the provision of daily or weekly masses and other services for a private intention, usually the repose of the souls of particular individuals.<sup>(361)</sup>

Chantries were frequently combined with a private chapel in a house. Bishop Hugh of Wells gave permission by licence for Ralph de Normanville to have a chantry chapel at his manor house of Neubo in the parish of Catesby(Northants.). On the death of Ralph's wife, the grant will expire. The patrons of Catesby, the prioress and convent of Catesby, and its vicar, John de Haliden, gave their consent. A chaplain was to be appointed, and the rights of the mother church safeguarded. The family were not exempt from attending the parish church, but they had to present themselves there at Christmas, on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, at Easter, at Whitsun and on the church of Catesby's patronal festival.<sup>(362)</sup> The charter was sealed on 22 July 1228. Similar rules were laid down for chantries established at Brampton Ash,<sup>(363)</sup> Polebrook,<sup>(364)</sup> and Great Addington.<sup>(365)</sup> Unfortunately, only details of chantries established in the Northampton archdeaconry from 1220-35 have survived for Hugh of Wells' episcopate.

Bishop Grosseteste granted a number of licences to erect private chapels, of which three were granted in the Huntingdon archdeaconry, namely, at Hatfield, Great Staughton and Hemel Hempstead.<sup>(366)</sup> The records are detailed, and in all of them the rights of the parish church are safeguarded. There may be no bell and no font, and the chapel must be served by a special chaplain (et cantariam per proprium capellanum in eadem) Walter de Godarrevill, knight, and his family must visit the parish church of Hatfield(Herts.)

for all the major festivals of the Church's year, unless they are prevented through illness, bad weather or any other reasonable and evident cause. He and his family may hear Mass and the Divine Office in the chapel, but no marriages or burial services or burials may take place there, nor may they make confession there ' unless they are at the point of death', but they may receive the bread and water of blessing (panem benedictus et aqua benedictam). The licence was granted because the parish church was some distance away from the petitioner's house. The road by which it was reached was, owing to floods, difficult to travel, especially during the winter months. (367)

The above is the only record in Grosseteste's register which provides a reason for granting a licence for a private chapel. No reasons were given for the setting up of private chapels at Delington , the home of Vitalis Engayne , in the parish of Great Staughton; or at Hayham, the home of Robert de Hayham in the parish of Hemel Hempstead. Both families were required to obey the restrictions laid upon them, safeguarding the rights of the incumbents and the parish churches. (368)  
All three families were to provide a suitable chaplain to serve in their private chapels.

A number of chapels were set up in Richard Gravesend's episcopate(1258-79), but none in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. Hamilton Thompson points out that at this date very little is found relating to the establishment of chantries at altars in parish churches or chapels, nor are any documents of this kind common until the beginning of the fourteenth century. (369)



An example of a short-term chantry may be found in Oliver Sutton's register. On 27 December 1293 Sir Hugh de Bibworth and his wife were granted a licence for a private chapel in their manor house in the parish of Kimpton(Herts.) The reason for the grant was that the road to the parish church was humpy, stony, and covered with mud in winter, and that Sir. Hugh's wife was unable to go to church during her pregnancy. A mandate was issued to the archdeacon of Huntingdon to deposit the grant in the church of Kimpton and to allow Sir Hugh and his wife to have a copy under the seal of the said archdeacon. The grant was to remain valid so long as the obstacles to church-going continued to exist. (370)

Similarly, Walter of Molesworth(Hunts.) was granted the right to have a private chapel in his manor of Molesworth, because his mother was old and frail and his wife was very fat (carnis sarcina) and the way to the parish church was long and, in winter, difficult. The grant was to be nullified if Walter did not observe the usual rules governing such chapels. This was given at Spaldwick on 16 November 1292. (371)

Details of the emoluments of the chaplains who served these chantries or private chapels are not given. Many of the foundation deeds are missing and the number of licences greatly exceeds the number of extant foundation deeds. However, some details are known about the origins of Roode's chantry in Godmanchester parish church. It was in existence in 1297, and possibly earlier, since in 1279 Martin, the chaplain, was a town tenant of four and a half acres of land and some meadow, though his benefice is not named. (372)

Robert Fox in his History of Godmanchester cites the example of a priest, Roger Strateshill who paid a fine of ten

shillings to the king ( Edward I) for a licence to present a messuage and garden, together with thirty-one acres of land and four acres of meadow in Godmanchester to the officiating priest of the chapel of the Blessed Mary, in the church of the Blessed Mary in Godmanchester, for the daily celebration of Mass. As no land or tenements could be permanently assigned to the church unless a royal licence sanctioning the alienation had first been obtained, this was granted in 1307. (373)

Other chantries founded in Huntingdonshire were at Waresley, Orton Waterville, St. John's, Huntingdon, Fenstanton. Hilton, Great Gransden, Elton, and Alconbury. (374)

The chantry founded at Waresley had problems with one of its chaplains. In 1338 Bishop Henry Burghersh addressed a mandate to the official of the archdeacon of Huntingdon directing him to examine the case of William de Weresle, the incumbent of a chantry in the church, who was accused of certain crimes and excesses. If necessary he was to be removed. (375)

At the time of his institution William de Weresley would have sworn on the gospels that he would faithfully observe the regulations laid down in the foundation deed. These would almost certainly have included some provision for his removal if he failed in his duty by neglecting the daily services, or was absent for a long time or accused of evil living. The outcome is not known.

On 10 March 1416/17 Bishop Philip Repington ordered an inquiry into the proposed union of the chantry in Waresley with the vicarage, on the petition of the vicar. The resources of the chantry were said to be insufficient to

maintain a chaplain and that it had been vacant for many years. The decision as to what services should thereafter be celebrated for the founders of the chantry was left to those whom the bishop empowered to act for him. (376) No record of this decision has survived, and the chantry is not referred to in subsequent registers.

Twelve chantries in Hertfordshire within the archdeaconry survived until their dissolution in 1547. They were founded within the parishes of Aldbury, Aldenham, Ashwell, Flamstead, Hatfield, Great Munden, Watton at Stone, Letchworth, Wallington and Tring. Baldock had a brotherhood priest and Hitchin was served in the same way.

All of the above chantries were benefices in the strict sense of the term. The founders made grants of endowments to the first chaplain and his successors, prescribing the duties which were to be performed in return. The Hertfordshire chantry certificates provide valuable details concerning these chantries. The chantry in Aldbury, founded by Sir Philip Aylesbury in 1335, had a chantry house, other buildings, orchards, gardens and a meadow. The chantry certificate records that this messuage had been let to farm to William Butler for forty years from 1 October 1543. The chantry had been given to the parson of the said parish, William Ventriss, in augmentation of his living, 'being an honest man and of good behaviour and of the age of 63 years'. (377)

Aldenham possessed two chantries: both were founded by Sir Humphrey Coningsby, Justice of the Common Pleas under Henry VIII. The first was founded within a chapel two miles from the parish church 'for the consolation of Christ's faithful and especially for the infirm, and for men and

women broken with age and women who have infants and who dwell far from the parish church'. The chantry certificate refers to a 'suspect place called Bushy Heath where many robberies have been committed and also in times past diverse households (the people being at the parish church) hath been spoiled and broken up. Upon which considerations(it is said) that the chapel was first founded'.<sup>(378)</sup> The chantry priest was John Ware who was described as a clerk and a man of 'good fame' and of the age of 60 years. He had no other living. The rents from the lettings provided him with a stipend of £12 13s., and he also had one tenement with a garden and orchard about the same containing one acre.

The second chantry had been established by Sir Humphrey 'for the findinge of a Prest within the Parisshe Churche of Aldenham for terme of xxj yeres wherof xiiij yeres shal be full expired at June next Anno 1549'. Evidently, the chantry was founded at the same time as the first chantry. The rents and lettings from various lands and tenements were to provide 'for a priest to say divine service during the said term, that is, twenty-one years, within the chapel of Our Lady in the church of Aldenham for the souls of the said Humphrey and one John Wyriall and others ...'. John White, aged 50 years, is the chantry priest, quaintly described as 'a man (not lerned) unmete to serve a cure. And hath non other lyvyng but the stipend above Mencioned'. He was not as well paid as the priest serving the chapel outside Aldenham, as he received £6 8s. 8d. in stipend.<sup>(379)</sup>

Details of other cantarists reveal that John Smart, aged 43 years was a man of 'godlie conversacon(sic) havinge non other lyvinge but the said Chauntre'( of Ashwell)<sup>(380)</sup>

James Shaw, chantry priest of Lowthes Chantry in the parish of Hatfield REgis ( previously Hatfield Episcopi) was described as as an ' impotent man aged 65 years and that he has no other living but the said chantry'. (381)

Two chantries, one in Great Munden and the other in Letchworth were in reality free chapels, and are described as such in the chantry certificates for Hertfordshire. The chantry at Great Munden was founded in 1459 in place of the nunnery of St. John Baptist, Rownay. It is described as being 'distant from the Parisshe a myle. And ther is a Church or Chapell belonging to the same which adioyneth to the Prestes Howse. And the same church is covered with tyle and the steeple with leade . John Bowchier is Incombent a man of lxxiiij yeres. The same Prest is parson of Halingburie Bowser in Essex whiche is worthe yerelie xij.li. vjs. viij.d.'. (382)

It is stated in the chantry certificate that 'The Ferme of the Prestes lodginge and one plate of meade called Rowney Marche containing j rode and the church yard (containing di: acre) reserved in thandes of the Chaplen or Incombent and is worthe to be letten by the yere vj.s. viij.d. exm'. (383) Presumably the elderly cantarist, John Bowchier resided in Halingburie Bowser, and a curate assisted him and acted as chaplain to this chapel. In the 1526 Subsidy roll Rowney is shown as having a master with a stipend of £7 , and an assistant curate with a stipend of £5 6s. 8d. (384)

Brooke Free chapel, founded within the parish of Letchworth, is mentioned in the Valor Ecclesiasticus , but not in the Subsidy rolls, so presumably it was a late foundation. (385)

The chapel was three miles distant from the parish church of Letchworth and seems to be very poor. The incumbent, William ap Rise received xxjs. viij.d. in 1547, and as the chantry certificate states, 'hathe lyving with the revenues therof (386) by the relief and charite of the inhabitants ther about'.

The free chapel of Whemsted, founded in the parish of Watton at Stone, seems also to have been in a sorry state. It is described in the chantry certificate as 'utterlie decayed'. Strangely, one — Goldingham, a layman, was the last incumbent. (387)

The chantry certificate for Wallington gives the information that an annual rent from certain lands called Walkers Mandsygittes and Harres provides the stipend to pay for a priest to pray for the soul of Richard Harvey. It provided a stipend of £6 for Giles Stokdall, described as 'a man of xliiij yeres resident uppon the said service and hathe non other lyvinge but the said stipend'. (388)

At Tring there was a stipendiary service sustained from the farm of certain parcels of ground occupied by a number of people. The lands had been given 'to the finding of a morrowmasse Preste for ever' and the provision of a stipend of iiij li. ij.s. v.d. Thomas Frythe held the stipendiary service in 1547. (389)

What was required of chantry priests was usually laid down in the foundation deed of a chantry. By far the most important duty was that of saying Mass for the founder and his family, both the living and the dead, and for those whom he wished to remember. The foundation deed of Roger de Luda's chantry in Hatfield parish church at the altar of St.

Anne made it clear that the chantry priest should personally celebrate a daily Mass, except on Fridays and Saturdays and the four major festivals of the Church's year, that is, Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and All Saints Day, for him and his wife and family. The chaplain is to say a special collect for the good estate of the founder and family while they are alive, and for their souls when they are dead.

After the death of the founder and the family it was laid down that their souls should be named before others both privately and openly at Mass. Five collects were to be used: the first collect for the souls of the founder and his wife, the second for his parents, the third for his brothers, the fourth for his benefactors, and the fifth for the living and the dead. On Friday the chaplain was required to celebrate Mass of the Cross, the votive Mass of the Five Wounds of Jesus, one of the most popular Masses of the late Middle Ages. On Saturdays he was to celebrate Mass in honour of the Five Joys of the Blessed Virgin, namely, the Annunciation, Nativity, the Resurrection, Ascension and her own Coronation in heaven. The five collects were to be said after the collect of the day. (390)

In addition chaplains had to recite the Office of the Dead with placebo and dirige. This deed was signed on 30 August (proxima post festum Decollationis Sancti Johannis Baptiste), 1332. (391)

The comparatively small endowments needed for a chantry brought the possibility of founding one within the means of many people. Within limits the founder of a chantry was also able to lay down for it whatever rules he pleased. Thus he was able to decide who should be remembered at the altar, and

what prayers should be used. The founder of a chantry was also able to choose under whose authority to place a chantry. Thus, he could make it a full ecclesiastical benefice over which the bishop would have direction or a service, whose chaplain must in most things obey a group, a guild or one or more private persons. An example of a service has already been shown at Wallington and Tring. Many unbeneficed clergy would have been grateful for the opportunity of having at least one year's employment. Those who served at Wallington and Tring were fortunate to hold more secure positions. Other unbeneficed clergy were able to serve as chaplains to guilds or fraternities.

#### **Guild Chaplains and Fraternities**

In addition to chantries in parish churches, a number of brotherhoods, fraternities or guilds existed in some parishes. These were distinct from those connected with various trades, and existed simply for religious purposes. The guild or fraternity having been formed, it secured the use of an altar in the parish church, and provided the endowment for the payment of a priest whose duty it was to say Mass daily on behalf of the brethren and sisters of the guild, both living and departed. (392)

These guilds, fraternities or brotherhoods were associations of layfolk who, under the patronage of a particular saint, the Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary or Corpus Christi undertook to provide the individual members of the brotherhood with a good funeral, together with regular prayer and Mass-saying afterwards for the repose of the soul of the dead person. Both the clergy and the laity were preoccupied with the safe transition of their souls from



this world to the next and especially with the shortening and easing of their stay in Purgatory.

A number of these guilds or fraternities owned property, including a guildhall or guild house, which was often called the 'brotherhood house'. Larger fraternities employed their own priests who were able to assist the beneficed clergy. Hertfordshire provides two good examples of such guilds or fraternities. Ashwell, in addition its chantry, also had a guild or fraternity founded within the church 'for the findinge of a Preste for ever'. He was to be sustained from the rents of assize paid to the brotherhood. The foundation deed read as follows:

#### ASSHEWELL

##### Foundation of the Gild of S. John Baptist

Licence for the King's brother George Duke of Clarence, Thomas Bishop of Lincoln the Chancellor & others to found a fraternity or Gild of four Guardians & other persons wishing to be of the fraternity within the church of S. Mary Asshewell C<sup>o</sup> Hertford to be called the Fraternity or Gild of S. John the Baptist in the said church. The said Guardians & the brethren & sisters of the fraternity shall have perpetual succession & shall form one body with power of acquiring land & possessions & of impleading & being impleaded & shall have a common seal & shall yearly elect Guardians for the government of the fraternity & remove them & elect others when they think fit & shall make ordinances for the governance of the fraternity. And grant to them of licence to acquire in mortmain after inquisition lands & possessions not held in chief to the value of £10 yearly for the sustenance of a chaplain to celebrate divine

service daily in the said church for the good estate of the King & his consort Elizabeth Queen of England & the said founders & the brethren & sisters of the fraternity & for their souls after death & the soul of Richard late Duke of York the King's father & the support of other works of piety.

The foundation deed is dated 16 Edward IV, 26 August ,  
(393)  
( 1476).

The chantry certificate reads: 'Doctor Taylor is vicar there ( in Ashwell) who fyndeth but one Preste to ministre to the holle Cure or Parisshe wherin ben above xxvj<sup>xx</sup> of people and of ther is about cc pore people. Item Thomas Daye of thage of liliij yeres is Brotherhedd Preste a man of good behaviour and well lerned exersysynge hym selfe in techinge of childerne franklie having non other lyvinge but the said salarie'. Added are the words: ' Note that here is a necessite for a Preste to assiste the Curate and to teche childerne'. (394)

Baldock also had a Gilde or Fraternite of Jhesu founded (395) within the parish church 'to have a contynuaunce for ever'. For a time Baldock had flourished as a provincial market town, but by the late Middle Ages it had declined. In response to the decline, the parishioners of Baldock in 1462 acquired papal licence to found a fraternity, to be known as the Guild of the Name of Jesus. The rector was unable to support himself or mantain hospitality as of old, and the parishioners could not keep their church in repair. The new association was established with the purpose of raising funds to redeem the situation. It was promoted by the attraction of an indulgence offered to contributors to the work of the guild. (396)

The chantry certificate states that there is no other priest to assist the parson but the Brotherhood Priest. He received his wages of £6 13s. 4d. at the hands of the Warden of the guild.

The above sum seems to have been the standard wage for a brotherhood priest, as the guild chaplain at Hitchin for the Guild of St.Mary, received the same.<sup>(397)</sup> This guild was founded in 1475, and had a Master and two guardians 'for the business and governance of the gild'. Every year on the Feast of the Nativity of St.Mary (September 8), the members, master and guardians are to elect a new master and two guardians and to make ordinances for the governance of the guild.<sup>(398)</sup>

It is not known how many fraternities or guilds there were in the Huntingdon archdeaconry, as not all of them survived into the sixteenth century. However, it appears that Godmanchester, for example, had six: the guilds of Blessed Mary 'in puerperio', Corpus Christi, Holy Trinity, St.John Baptist, St.Katherine and the guild of St.George.<sup>(399)</sup> Although no chantry certificates have survived for the county of Huntingdon, some rent returns of guild and obit lands have survived which provide useful information about some of the guilds in Godmanchester. One entry reads: 'One Guylde here called Corpus Christi Guilde begun by the devotion of the parishioners ( pishemers ) to have a priest to sing Mass and intended to have contynuaunce forever, having for the mayntenance thereof certain lands and tenements holden by copy(illegible) to the yearly value of xi li. xiiij . whereof is employed yearly to the stipend of the priest vi.li. (£6). The rest to the payment of the king's

fee ferme of Godmanchester. Stipendiary there being one Edmund Arshback of thage of lx yeres, having none other lyving and being not able to ferme a cure for aye'. (400)

Reference to another surviving guild is also recorded in the same document. 'One other Guilde there of the Trinitie ordeyned upon the devotion of the inhabitants and intended to have contynuaunce forever having for the mayntaynaunce thereof certain copyhold lands and tenements to the yerely value of iij li. iiij s. iiij d. ...'. (401)

There is no reference to the other guilds. Fortunately, evidence of their existence may be found in another source.

Some people belonged to more than one guild, as is evident from their wills. Thomas Robyn, in his will of 13 December 1306, left to the fraternity of the Guild of St. John Baptist a quarter of barley. To the fraternity of the Guild of Corpus Christi he left 'a rood of meadow lying in Hudpool, which formerly was my father's and a quarter of barley'. (402)

Agnes Lane, also from Godmanchester, in her will of 5 August 1483, left to the fraternity of the Guild of Holy Trinity 'half an acre of meadow, lying in Moreland, between the meadow of John Agedde and John Bonefoy, and one acre of meadow, lying in Redemeadow, for the annual celebration of my anniversary and that of my husband, Thomas Lane'. (403)

It appears that Yaxley too had a number of guilds, namely, the guilds of Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John Baptist, St. Katherine, St. Peter, the Holy Cross, St. George and St. Giles. Little is known of these guilds, but the guild of Holy Trinity received 4d. from a former member, Henry Bosworth of Yaxley, in his will of 1536. (404)

Glatton church had three guilds: Holy Trinity, St. Mary and St. John. In 1483 Thomas Hethe of Alconbury made a bequest of 3s. 4d. to the Guild of Holy Trinity in the church of Glatton. In the same year John Cole of Great Catworth left in his will the sum of 6s. 8d. to the fraternity of Glatton. Both the Guild of the Holy Trinity and the Guild of St. Mary in Glatton benefited from legacies in Bond's will of 1501. In 1538 John Garnett of Huntingdon left the sum of 3s. 4d. to the Guild of St. John in Glatton church. (405) These legacies show how important the guilds were to layfolk. Although clergy were members of such guilds, their control and government was in the hands of the laity.

Sometimes a reference in a will is the only evidence we have of the existence of a parochial guild within a church. Thus, in his will of 1533 John Rochedale (Ridisdall), formerly vicar of Great Gransden, left to the Guild of Our Lady 12s., and to the Guild of St. Katherine 12s. (406) John More left to the brotherhood of Our Lady in Fenstanton, in his will of 1536, a bushel of barley together with other bequests to St. Mary Magdalene, St. Katherine and to St. John's light a pound of wax. (407)

Other wills reveal that there were guilds in the churches of Tring, Conington and Stilton. (408) John Lake of Tring, in his will, dated 20 January 1534, requested the brotherhood of the Blessed Trinity of Tring to arrange a trental of masses to be said for him and his good friends' souls. He gave to every standing light within the church half a bushel of barley, and also willed that every priest of Tring saying Mass and Dirige should have 6d. (409)

Many brotherhoods, especially those in country churches, had few, if any, endowments, and would have to rely on annual subscriptions. J.J.Scarisbrick has pointed out the number of guilds returned on the so-called 'chantry' certificates were but a fraction of the total in existence. (410) Some guilds were very simple in character. In 1333 twelve men of Hertford agreed to maintain twelve candles to burn before the image of St. John Baptist in the church of All Saints, Hertford during all hours on feast days. Two wardens managed the affairs of the brotherhood and very probably made collections which were its sole source of revenue. The association was probably one of friends, as in 1346 five of the brethren were dead and no effort seems to have been made to fill their places. (411)

In the Subsidy of 1526 there is a number of references to stipendiary clergy in addition to assistant curates. Reference has already been made to the stipendiary service provided at Wallington, which had been established somewhat like a chantry, but no reference was made to establishing an altar in the parish church. Glatton, with its several guilds, had two stipendiary priests in 1526. They received stipends of £4 6s. 8d. and £3 6s. 8d. respectively. (412) These stipends could have been provided by members of the various guilds in existence in the parish.

Stipendiary priests are referred to in a number of parishes which also had assistant curates, While the curates are referred to in the Subsidy as having received their stipends from the incumbents of the parishes, the stipendiaries, who received on average £4 annually, evidently received their wages from other sources. Stipendiaries are

mentioned in the following parishes: Therfield, Stilton, Woodston, Kimbolton, Catworth, St. Neots, Hail Weston, Godmanchester and Somersham.<sup>(413)</sup> St. Neots had two stipendiaries in addition to an assistant curate who was paid by the vicar.<sup>(414)</sup> At Hail Weston Dom. Robert Roce, a stipendiary, received 10s. for a trental of Masses. No other stipend is mentioned, but he would almost certainly have received money other than that in order to survive.<sup>(415)</sup>

It has been suggested that the guilds and parishes were sometimes in opposition and both incompatible and conflicting.<sup>(416)</sup> Eamon Duffy argues that too much should not be made of the distinction between membership of the parish and membership of a guild.<sup>(417)</sup> It is evident from the Ashwell chantry certificate that members of the Guild of St. John Baptist and their brotherhood priest worked together for the good of the whole parish.<sup>(418)</sup>

Evidence is available from churchwardens' accounts, not unfortunately in the Huntingdon archdeaconry, that guilds supported their churches. Thus, the various guilds in Ashburton (Devon) church in 1511-12 are said to have maintained lights before respective images, and put aside the surplus contributions for the general church funds.<sup>(419)</sup> The churchwardens' accounts for 1492-93 in the parish of St. Michael, Bishop's Stortford, show that one of its guilds, the Guild of the Blessed Mary, gave to the repair of the church bells the sum of £7 3s. 4d. Other accounts show that the guild members gave regular sums of money towards the repair and maintenance of the bells.<sup>(420)</sup>

When the church needed rebuilding at Bodmin the many guilds in that church organized the fund-raising for it

between 1469 and 1472 by levying a penny or halfpenny on their members.<sup>(421)</sup> For the most part it would seem that guilds and parishes as a whole worked together for the good of their parish church. There is no reason to suppose that the guild members in Huntingdon and Hertfordshire churches did not do the same.

### **Obits and Lights**

At the heart of the intercession for the departed was the singing of the Office of the dead, Placebo and Dirige, together with the celebration of Requiem Masses. Every guild would prescribe attendance at the funeral of every deceased brother or sister as a condition of membership.

The desire to be remembered after death in the intercessions of the Church led many parishioners who were unable to afford the luxury of endowing a chantry to leave money for an obit ( a funeral service or requiem). The money or land was given or bequeathed to secure an annual Mass to be said by the parish priest or someone specified in a will, often on the anniversary of the death of the person for whom the prayers are offered. The wills of the fifteenth and sixteenth-centuries provide many examples of such bequests. In his will of 1491 Edward Stanton of Great Staughton left 26s. 8d. to the prior and convent of st. Neots church for Masses, 5d. to Robert Potter, a summoner, for fives Masses and 10s. to the faithful of Huntingdon.<sup>(422)</sup> The latter bequest would naturally have been made on the assumption that 'the faithful' would pray for the repose of his soul. A detailed provision for prayers was made in Peter Rontell of Therfield's will of 1532. He bequeathed for the health of his soul and of the souls of Denys Rontell and Joan ,his



wife, his father and mother and for the soul of John Blethe £6 of lawful money of England to any honest priest to sing a Mass monthly in the church of Therfield at the altar of St. Katherine. He also bequeathed to 'the clerk that shall help the priest to sing every week for the welmonth 2d. every week ... and 5d. every Sunday for a welmonth to five poor men and women of Therfield at the discretion of my executors'. (423)

Those who could afford it made provision for more than one requiem Mass. Thus, requests for votive Masses of the Five Wounds of Jesus were requested. This was one of the most popular votive Masses of the late Middle Ages. It was prefaced in the missal by a legend in which the Archangel Raphael, the angel of healing, appeared to pope Boniface I giving deliverance from Purgatory for any soul for whom five Masses of the Wounds were celebrated. It was one of the most common votive Masses specified in obit provisions. (424)

In her will of 1545 Agnes Pulter of Broughton gave 20d. for the saying of five Masses of the Five Wounds. (425) In 1542 John Ancell of Welwyn left '20d. for Bro. George of Watton (at Stone) to sing five Masses of the Five Wounds of Our Lord'. (426) Edward Stanton of Great Staughton also left 20d. for five Masses of the Five Wounds, in 1491. (427) and Thomas Okilshawe of Walkern left 5s. to the Franciscans at Ware to sing five Masses of the Five Wounds and ten of requiem, in his will dated 30 July 1527. (428)

Some parishioners were able to bequeath lands and tenements towards the provision of obits, anniversaries and lights. In the chantry certificates for Hertfordshire, the

church of Ashwell had seven obits paid for in this way. Thomas Tomason farmed a close and seventeen acres of arable land lying in diverse fields in the parish and paid a rent of ten shillings annually for maintaining lamps. (429) The remaining six obits were all paid for from the rents of several pieces of land between three and eight acres in extent. The chantry certificate ends with the words, 'some (of) the Parisshoners affirme uppon ther othes to have byn bestowed by the space of vij yeres past & more uppon the pore people of the Towne'. (430) The reforms concerning the provision of lights had meant that monies were being diverted to the poor in the parish.

The provision of ceremonial lights of various kinds was the most costly of all church charges in the late medieval church in England. The maintenance of these lights became the single most popular expression of late medieval piety. The candles used at Mass were always to be of pure wax, except at Masses for the dead they might be de communi cera, that is of yellow wax. Torches (torchae), frequently mentioned in both lay and clerical wills, was the term used for a coarse form of taper, largely mixed with resin, and used in escorting the body to the church, and from the church to the grave. Most churches kept a stock of these torches, and they were loaned for funeral purposes. The large tapers burning by the corpse in the church and lighted again at the 'month's mind', or at definite obit services, were of wax. (431)

The parish of Kelshall had rents from lands for the provision of three obits and for the finding of a light before the Rood. Three and a half acres of arable land in the common field of Kelshall 'which were geven tyme out of

mynde for the findinge of a lyght in thandes of John Wynde thelder and payeth by the yere' yielded xxjd.<sup>(432)</sup> The chantry certificates show that obits were found in twenty-eight other churches in Hertfordshire within the archdeaconry.<sup>(433)</sup>

Although no chantry certificates have survived for the county of Huntingdon, rent returns made in 1547 for the town of Huntingdon and Godmanchester provide evidence of a number of obits, details of which are given in the appendix. However, evidence for the provision of lights is available in the many wills still preserved in the Huntingdon Record Office.

In his will of 1537 Francis Grene of Folksworth, in addition to other gifts to the church, 'gives to the torches of the said church 8d., to Our Lady a light above the altar and a pound of wax'.<sup>(434)</sup> Regnold Sybley, late of Hail Weston in Southo parish, in his will of 1535 made a gift of 4d. to provide two tapers, one for the rood and one 'to Our Lady of Pity'. To keep his obit annually he gave one of his best kine.<sup>(435)</sup> In addition to her gifts to the high altar of her church at Great Gaddesden, Constance Knight, in 1496, left 4d. to each of the principal lights in the church, and to the torches she gave two bushels of wheat.<sup>(436)</sup> These are just a few of the examples of many bequests made to the lights of the churches.

Others who could afford it made provision for the saying of a trental, thirty masses celebrated on thirty consecutive days, thereby providing work for an unbeneficed priest, who would have to rely on such to live. The cost of a trental was upwards of ten shillings. In 1541 Thomas Walker of Holywell left ten shillings in his will to 'my ghostly

(spiritual) father for a trental of masses'.<sup>(437)</sup> Some were able to afford more than one trental: William Tokfield of Northchurch , sometimes known as Berkhamstead, St. Mary, who made his will in 1529 'will have seid for my soull and my frends soulls vj trentalls'. No mention was made of payment for this service, but it may have been taken for granted. He also gave generously to the church: 12d. to the high altar and 12d. to every standing light. Presumably his executors would arrange for the payment for the trentals.<sup>(438)</sup>

Elizabeth Scott of Broughton, in 1542, desired two trentals and so left 20s. in her will for that purpose.<sup>(439)</sup> Robert Hube, on the other hand, it would seem, could only afford half a trental together with a Dirige, yet he asked for a 'drynking in the church as the use of the church is'. He had formerly been vicar of Winwick and died in 1541.<sup>(440)</sup> Both clerical and lay wills made in the latter part of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century reveal much about the beliefs of the late medieval Church and facets of popular religion.

### Clerical Wills

An examination of a random sample of fifty clerical wills made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries shows that they were not so much ways of disposing of property as testaments of faith. Caution has been advised by several historians regarding wills in general for this period as pointers to faith.<sup>(441)</sup> Frequently, scribes were used to complete wills and could have been expressing their own views, although one would expect this not to be the case with clerical wills. Most of the wills express the traditional standard catholic preamble: the soul was bequeathed to

Almighty God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to all the saints. For almost all of the testators their religious beliefs were expressed in acts of charity, leaving money for the poor, making generous gifts to those dependent upon them such as faithful servants and assistants, and to those needing help with their education.

The earliest of the wills under consideration is that of John Oudeby, rector of Flamstead (Herts.), which is dated 4 March 1413/14.<sup>(442)</sup> One would expect some of the seven corporal works of mercy - feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, relieving the prisoner, housing the stranger, and burying the dead- which loomed large in the Christian philosophy of life to be reflected in all wills. Strangely, apart from bequests to his family, gifts of books and vestments to Flamstead church, a chalice to Barrowby(Lincs.) church, and personal gifts to his servant, the poor do not feature in his will. However, he asked his executors to dispose of the remainder of his estate, after all the above bequests had been made, as may seem best for the salvation of his soul. Unusually, he made no request for prayers, Those who would benefit from Oudeby's will would naturally be expected to pray for the repose of his soul. Even where 'common doles' are not expressly stipulated in a will, they can be presumed to have been as routine as the requiem Mass offered for every dead Christian.<sup>(443)</sup>

Several clergy leave the details of the distribution of their goods to the poor to their executors. Thus, John Spencer, formerly vicar of St.Mary's, Huntingdon, while not specifying gifts to be bequeathed to the poor, requested that

the 'residue of my goods not given and unbequeathed are committed to the disposition of my executors'.<sup>(444)</sup> The vicar of Great Stukeley, William Marshall, who died in 1538, instructed his executors to 'do otherwise for the health of my soul as it shall seem best'.<sup>(445)</sup>

William Smyth, rector of Great Catworth, in 1528, bequeathed a penny dole and asked that his executors dispose of the residue of his goods unbequeathed 'that it may be most pleasure to God and expedient for my soul'.<sup>(446)</sup> William Williams, a priest, formerly of the church of St. John Baptist, Huntingdon, in 1538, requested that the residue of all goods not bequeathed be distributed 'in deeds of charity'.<sup>(447)</sup>

While the above clergy, and seven others from the sample of fifty, were content to leave the distribution of unbequeathed goods to their executors,<sup>(448)</sup> others were more specific and some were generous and far-seeing. In return, of course, they hoped that the grateful legatees would pray for the repose of their souls. William Ferrars, late rector of St. John Baptist, Huntingdon in 1542, after providing for those who would attend his funeral, gave and bequeathed to every poor household in his parish 4d. To every other poor household in the three other parishes in Huntingdon he gave 2d. These bequests were to be made on the day of his burial. On the thirtieth day afterwards every poor household was to receive a further 4d.<sup>(449)</sup> In this way William Ferrars could be assured that many would attend his funeral. He could also be a priest who had a genuine concern for the people of his parish and the whole town of Huntingdon.

John Wisette, the vicar of Willian in 1544, gave four marks in money to the priests, clerks and poor people on the

day of his burial, and forty shillings to be given out at his month's mind. He also gave 2s. 4d. to the poor people of the church of St. Botolph in Cambridge, to pray for the souls of Thomas Wysette and Anne, his wife. (450)

John Rochedale (Ridisdall ?) , the former vicar of Great Gransden in 1533, made a long term provision for the poor of his parish in his will. After numerous bequests to Great Gransden church and its guilds and to members of his family, he willed that 'all profits, rents, advantages that hereafter shall yearly grow and come of all my lands thereof growing pastures and meadows lying within the parish of Gransden aforesaid shall grow, remain and come to the use of the poor inhabitants of Gransden aforesaid after the manner ensuing that is to wit that the poor people that have most need shall borrow by the space of one year with sufficient surety such money as shall buy a horse or a couple of bullocks and without any increase or advantage to be taken for it, and that there be yearly disposed by the church reeves at my obit of the profit of the same lands vjs. at the last amongst the poor people of the same town...'. (451) Here would seem to be a parish priest who really cared about the poor of his parish.

Thomas Dalison, rector of Clothall (Herts.), in his will of 1541, left £4 in sterling money to be distributed in alms or penny dole to the poor people at the day of his burial. (452)

Francis Grene, rector of Folksworth, who died in 1537 left 4d. to every householder in his parish to pray for his soul. (453)

John Hatfield, priest, of Little Gaddesden (Herts.) was equally generous. In his will of 1543 he made provision that 'pouertie be honestlie refreshed with meate and drink' and to every poure houssholdere of Little Gaddesden xijd '.

To householders who possessed a plough 8d. should be given. The poor of several other places , Rinxall, Nettleden, Freshden and St. Margarets are also to benefit, each village was to have 2s, to be distributed amongst them. (454)

William Emelton was a cantarist in the church of Orton Waterville and, in his will of 1544, he gave to the poor conditionally. Georgina Emelton and her son were to benefit from his will by receiving forty shillings and a cow, and a further five marks and a cow. The money was to be administered by 'master parson' to be paid out as and when it was needed. If Georgina dies or the money is spent then he willed that the remainder should be given to her children and to poor people. Five marks and a cow were left to William Elie. As he was under the age of twenty, the money was to be left in the hands of 'master parson', desiring him in the meantime to see William set forth to some good craft or occupation, and if he would not be ruled to do as he will have him, then he was to have nothing. In the event of young William's death, then the money was to be given and bestowed in deeds of charity for thrifty souls at the discretion and will of 'master parson' that he and his friends might be prayed for. (455)

Thomas Okilshawe, former rector of Walkern (Herts.), was also cautious in bestowing his goods. In 1527 he left the sum of four shillings for repairs to the bridge at the church end in Walkern, on condition that 'if it be made by the feast of All Souls or else (it be) well forward in (the) making, and if not I will that the said four shillings be disposed in alms, as my executors think best'. (456)

Thomas Sisson, a priest from Alconbury, in his will of



1548, bequeathed forty shillings to three relatives from a debt owed to him by Thomas Sysson of St.Ives. He willed that twenty shillings of that same debt should be given to poor people , and the rest he forgave him, ' if he pay this truly'.<sup>(457)</sup> John Dryvere, a priest from Ramsey, had not much to give, so in his will, dated 1540, he bequeathed his pension payment, 'due at the Annunciation of Our Lady last past', to his executors to bestow 'as they shall think best by their discretion'.<sup>(458)</sup>

These are just some examples of the bequests made to poor by the clergy. Twenty-six clergy from the sample of fifty made bequests to the poor in their wills. As has been shown, some were very generous. Almost all gave generously to the churches they had served. Thus, John Wright, former rector of Clothall(Herts.),in his will of 1519, bequeathed to his church his chalice, his Mass book, his vestment,two altar cloths and twenty shillings. To the mother church of Lincoln he left twelve pence. His interest in other churches is shown in his bequests to Ufford church of twenty shillings<sup>(459)</sup> and to the brotherhood of Baldock twenty shillings in money.

John Alcock, rector of Somersham from 1488 to 1524, left £5 to the canons of St.Ives, twenty shillings to Somersham church, and a further twenty shillings to the bells of the church. The churches of Colne and Pidley, chapels of ease to Somersham, were not forgotten, as they were also to receive twenty shillings each. The remainder of his goods unbequeathed he left to his sister, Agnes Bull, and M.Thomas Howse of Clement Hostel in Cambridge and to John Taylor to dispose of 'to the best behalf of my soul'.<sup>(460)</sup>

William Tailarde, D.D., rector of Offord D'Arcy, who

died in 1532, also left sums of money to various churches: twenty shillings each to Abbots Ripton and Statham churches, forty shillings to the repair of the 'batilments' of the parish church of Offord D'Arcy, and forty shillings towards the twelve apostles and the images for the rood loft in Diddington. He held both Abbots Ripton and Offord D'Arcy at his death, and he had been vicar of Diddington until 1502 when he resigned. (461)

Among the most generous in his bequests to churches was William Marshall, former vicar of Great Stukeley, who made his will on 20 March 1538. After giving the token fourpence to the mother church at Lincoln, he gave ten shillings to Great Stukeley church, twelve pence to the bells, and eight pence to the torches. The following churches were each to receive three shillings and fourpence, namely, Bow Broughton, Toseland, Gamlingay, St. Neots, Little Paxton, Hail Weston (in Southoe parish) and Southoe. (462)

Some wished to have a more permanent memorial. John Baylis, a priest dwelling in Hertford in the parish of All Saints, in his will of 1538, gave 6s. 8d. to the church. Then he willed that his executor 'shall make or cause to be made there a closet or parclose as myself informed him, and also I will that he shall buy a stone to lie on me as he himself thinks most convenient, and moreover I will have a picture of a priest with a chalice in his hand to lie upon the stone'. He also gave to the high altar twelvepence, to the changing of the organs 6s. 8d., and to the building of the church house 6s. 8d. The church of Diddington in the Isle of Ely would also benefit by the sum of 6s. 8d. (463)

Some clergy gave in kind. William Ashwell, late rector

of Caldecote(Herts.) in his will of 1542, gave a hanging of satin for the high altar of his church, a corporas (or corporal) case of cloth of gold together with the corporas. The parish church of Baldock was to have his cope and his great coverlet to be used before the sacrament. In addition he left to every house in the town twelve pence.(464)

John Rochedale, referred to earlier, in addition to his bequests to the bells, torches and guilds of Great Gransden church, gave his best table cloths to the high altar.(465) John Dryvere, a priest of Ramsey, in his will of 1540, gave his best coverlet to lie before the high altar on the guild days. He also gave to the aforesaid church a pair of sheets or 'as much money as they be worth'.(466)

Several clergy were public spirited, among whom was William Lystere, parson of Benington who in his will of 1541 gave 'to the mending of the highway from my brother Laurence's house unto the church gate 13s 4d'.(467) Bequests to highway repairs were also made by Thomas Okilshawe in 1527. He specified that the money should be spent in repairing the highway 'betwixt the croft at the church end and the plash of water against Thomas Cyrys' house'.(468) William Halyn, rector of Bramfield in 1536 and William Smyth of Catworth, (469) in 1528, both made bequests to the repairs of the highway.

Apart from bequests to churches, family and friends, the most important item in almost all the pre-Reformation wills was the provision for the health of one's soul in the here-after. Some reference has already been made to the elaborate provisions which were made to secure a safe and speedy passage through Purgatory. Purgatory, the intermediate state between death and judgement was regarded mainly

as a state of penal suffering. The popularity of Gregory the Great's Dialogues c.593/4 , in which he recorded visions illustrating the benefit accruing to souls in Purgatory from Masses offered on their behalf, together with the writings of St. Augustine, were largely responsible for the medieval conception of Purgatory as a place of fiery torment. (470) Accordingly, the chief aim in life came to be to make provision against the torments of Purgatory.

It was therefore natural that both the clergy and the laity of the Church would endeavour to seek relief by the prayers of the faithful which were thought to be efficacious. Bequests were made both to individuals and religious communities for constant prayer for the departed. Indeed, the chantry system, as has been shown, was based upon it. Thus, John Leek, formerly rector of Houghton, in his will of 1459, gave generously to the senior vicars and junior vicars (choral) of Lincoln cathedral , presumably expecting to be remembered at Mass. He also made gifts to the nuns of Markyate and the prior of Stoneley, and 'xls, to Isabella Chawelton, a sister of St. Katherine's in Lincoln, to pray for the soul of her sister Grace and my soul'. (471)

John Pierson, vicar of Abbotsley, in a will dated 6 September 1519, specifically bequeathed £6 to Sir Robert Mysyell to sing for his soul at an altar within Cambridge for the space of twelve months. In addition he left to the four churchwardens of Abbotsley his kine, sixteen quarters of barley 'to be held by them and their successors, churchwardens of Abbotsley aforesaid forevermore', on condition that 'they regularly keep or cause to be kept a solemn obit with Dirige and Mass within the church of Abbotsley aforesaid

yearly forevermore on the day of my decease of the value of  
iiijs. for my soul and the souls of my father, my mother and  
of all my friends'. The wardens are required to renew the  
kine and the malt. (472)

John Alcock or Alcock, rector of Somersham in 1524,  
referred to earlier, apart from his generosity to his church  
and religious community at St. Ives, also made elaborate  
arrangements for his obit. He left sixteen marks in money  
for his cousin, Thomas Hows of Clement Hostel, Cambridge, to  
sing for his soul for two years. He was required to visit  
Somersham church four times a year during the most solemn  
feasts. The money he was to receive from the sale of his  
house to Robert Foster was to be bestowed yearly on his  
'anniversary day' to priests and clerks to sing Mass and  
Dirige. Money from the sale of goods that remain, his debts  
paid, was 'to the performance of the said annual prayers'. (473)

In his will of 1539 William Martyn, a priest of Conington,  
requested that a trental of Masses which he began in  
his lifetime be completed, and that after his death other  
trentals would be sung by any honest priest for his soul, his  
father and mother's souls and all the souls that 'I have  
been bound to pray for during my lifetime'. (474)

Many clergy made provision for obits. Thus, John  
Rochedale bequeathed to the vicar of Great Gransden the sum  
of twelve shillings to pray for him annually in the bede  
roll, to be paid to him at his Dirige. The church reeve  
has to see that his obit was kept. (475) William Emelton, a  
cantarist of Orton Waterville, in his will of 1544, gave  
'unto a good, virtuous priest that is going unto learning in  
the University of Cambridge, and having no board or lodging

eight marks to pray for me, my friends and all Christian souls. The fellows of Pembroke Hall who were priests were also to be given four marks each to the same.<sup>(476)</sup> John Knight, vicar of Offley, in his will of 1545 requested that 'a priest shall pray for me and my friends a quarter of the year. And he (is) to have five nobles for his wages'.<sup>(477)</sup>

While some clergy had little to leave to others, there were those who were comparatively wealthy. Some clergy were generous to the poor, and others made generous gifts to various churches. Gilbert Wigan, vicar of Great Gransden, in his will of 1535 made the usual gifts to the church, lights and torches. He also bequeathed to the parish church of Leyland (Lancs.) 'to bye a grette bell to tenour those iiij other belles that be ther att this present day, £40'. He also bequeathed to the parish churches of Hemel Hempstead, Flamstead, Little Gaddesden and Studham 3s.4d. each. The brethren of Ashridge were to receive ten shillings for a trental for him. The nuns of St. Margaret's de Bosco in Ivingho parish (Bucks.) were also to receive ten shillings, as were the nuns of St. Giles in Flamstead parish (Herts.). Nicholas Never, a priest, was given £10 to pray for him. His two godsons were to receive £10 each, 'to be delyuered vnto William Yonge to be kepte for ther behove and vse towardses the fynding of them to scole'. Other bequests of money were made to members of his family.<sup>(478)</sup>

Richard Bramhall, vicar of St. Ives in 1545, after bequeathing sums of money to the high altar, the bells and torches in church, left 6s.8d. to the repairs to the highway. Several beds were left to friends, and six silver spoons, numerous gowns, and livestock, a total of six ewes, two lambs, a wether, a

great brown cow, a bullock from his herd , and a gelding were all left to various friends. In addition he gave to Brother Edward Colman 'the 'vowson of the vicarage of the parish church of St. Ives aforesaid with all the whole right and interest that I have in the said advowson'.<sup>(479)</sup> What that right and interest was is not clear. Ramsey abbey were the original patrons, but with the dissolution of the monastery that patronage ceased. At the institution of the successor to Bramhall on 4 October 1545, William Thynne Esq. and others presented him. It is possible that Bro. Edward Colman was one the 'others' referred to above.<sup>(480)</sup>

John Wisette's generosity to the poor has already been noted; but apart from this and the considerable sums of money to be expended on prayers for the repose of his soul, his generosity was expressed in other ways. He gave generously to church repairs, the bells and torch light at Willian. Bequests to the church of Landbeach ( Cambs.) were made as follows: to the curate, 8d. and to the clerk 4d., to poor people 2s. 8d. A bequest of 6s. 8d. was made to the repair of the highway at Stevenage 'in the lane against busymede'. His nephews, Leonard Wysette and Henry Wysette were each to receive the sum of twenty shillings when they came of age. The four sons of his friend, Edward Geve, were each to receive 3s. 4d. He possessed a flock of four lambs, three ewes and five sheep which he gave to various legatees. The sheep were included with monetary gifts. His clothing, beds, and bedding were all distributed among family and friends. The house at Cambridge which his mother gave him in her last will and testament was to remain in the family, with his nephew, Henry Wisette and his lawful heirs forever.

The residue of all his goods and chattels, stuff and store of household, after his debts were paid, are to be disposed of in deeds of charity, as his executors should think best. (481)

John Wisette was certainly better off than many of his fellow clergy.

Henry Newell, the former rector of Broughton, was also financially better off than many of his contemporaries. In his will of 1540, after making numerous bequests to his church of Broughton and to members of his family, gave four ewes, a lamb and a cow to various godchildren. Unusually, he willed that his successor in the benefice should have for dilapidations the sum of £10 and 'praying him in the way of charity to be contented and not to vex or trouble my poor executors, and if my next successor will not so be contented and pleased I will that the said legacie of £10 to be void and he to have no more than the lawe shall give unto hym'. (482)

Some of the sixteenth century wills reveal that a small number of clergy possessed small libraries. Others, whom one would expect to have a large library, make no reference in their wills to books of any sort. Thus, William Tailarde, D.D., already seen as a generous benefactor, helped 'John Grene to school' with a legacy of forty shillings, but he made no reference to any of his books. (483)

Thomas Dalison, B.C.L., the rector of Clothall next to Baldock, who made his will on 16 December 1541 gave generously to his 'honest priest' for his year's obit, and referred to his brewing vessels, but said nothing about his books. (484)

However, in 1527, Thomas Okilshawe, already referred to, bequeathed two books, the Decretals and the Sext to M. Peter



Wilkinson, a book to M. Ashton of his college, and the rest of his books were to be given to Brother Lister. (485)

Richard Slayfght of Bishop's Hatfield (Herts.), who died in 1532, evidently had a number of books, as he described them as 'lying in the chest at St. Anne's altar'. (486) He made special reference to his copy of the Pupilla Oculi. Wordsworth, in his 'The Old Service Books of The English Church', wrote, 'the curate if he were in earnest about his duties to his flock, would probably have upon his shelf, at his bed's head or on a desk or in his chimney corner (or else in the sacristy, if his church contained one), some such book or books as Pupilla Oculi'. (487) This was a manual of pastoral theology, first written in 1384 by John de Burgh and printed three times between 1510 and 1518. (488) Richard Slayfght obviously valued his copy, as he stipulated in his will that it be 'tied with a chain on the desk afore the image of St. Anne'. (489)

Some clergy had only service books to bequeath: Francis Grene, already noted for his gifts to the poor, bequeathed to his church of Folksworth his mass book, his manual, his processional, his festival, his pica and his porteous. The rest of his books he gave to his two cousins, who were priests. (490) John Hatfield, described as a priest of the town of Hertford, but living in the parish of Little Gaddesden, in 1547, had esoteric tastes, as he left all his books of physicke, all his stills and pots to John Eames, his friend. To the curate of Little Gaddesden he left 'such books as shall be convenient for him'. (491)

A significant feature of most of the clerical wills made after 1530 is that they are little different from those made earlier in the century and in the previous century. Twenty-nine wills made before 1547 all had the traditional catholic preamble, and all the testators made provision for (492) prayers after their deaths. Both clerical and lay wills of the Reformation period, prior to 1547, show that people were largely traditionalists.

## Notes on Section 2 The Clergy

- 1 P.Heath, The English Parish Clergy on The Eve of The Reformation (London and Toronto,1969), 14; Liturgy and Worship, eds. W.K.Lowther Clarke, C.Harris (London, 1947), 647-649; L.Duchesne, Christian Worship (London, 1949), 364-374.
- 2 N.Orme, English Schools In The Middle Ages (London, 1973), 14, 15.
- 3 Grosseteste, 29, 54, 310, 360, 402.
- 4 Ibid. 255.
- 5 Ibid. 250-300.
- 6 Ibid. 275.
- 7 Gravesend, 173.
- 8 Thesis: Patronage chapter, 5-6.
- 9 Sutton, VII, passim.
- 10 Ibid. VIII, 74.
- 11 Ibid. VII, 113.
- 12 Ibid. VIII,74.
- 13 Ibid. VII, 20.
- 14 Ibid. VII, 24.
- 15 Ibid. VIII,78; VII, 11,25,34.
- 16 Ibid. VIII, 88; VII, 89.
- 17 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. II, fo. 237<sup>V</sup>.
- 18 Ibid. fo.231<sup>V</sup>.
- 19 Ibid. fos. 231<sup>R</sup>- 255<sup>V</sup>.
- 20 Ibid. IV, fo. 361<sup>V</sup>.
- 21 Ibid. fos. 362<sup>R</sup>-392<sup>R</sup>.
- 22 Ibid. X, fos. 283<sup>R</sup>- 334<sup>V</sup>; XI, fos. 241<sup>R</sup>-289<sup>R</sup>.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid. XIII, fo. 271<sup>R</sup> (Westmill), fo.280<sup>R</sup> (Holywell), fo.280<sup>V</sup> (Winwick), fo.282<sup>V</sup> (Ellington), fo.284<sup>V</sup> (Little Stukeley)

- 25 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XIV,fos.271<sup>r</sup>.(Alwalton),328<sup>v</sup>.(Berk-  
hampstead,St.Peter), 329<sup>r</sup>.(Little Gidding),330<sup>v</sup>.(Holy-  
well), 331<sup>r</sup>.(Ayot St.Lawrence), 331<sup>v</sup>.(Swineshead),  
331<sup>v</sup>.(Keyston), 332<sup>r</sup>.(Cottered), 332<sup>r</sup>.(Holywell),332<sup>r</sup>·  
(Stapleford), 332<sup>v</sup>.(Flamstead), 336<sup>r</sup>.(Glatton),339<sup>v</sup>·  
(Hatfield), 349<sup>r·-v</sup>.(Conington), 356<sup>r</sup>.(Hamerton), 356<sup>v</sup>·  
(Sawtry, All Saints), 362<sup>r</sup>.(Abbots Ripton), 362<sup>v</sup>·(Mor-  
borne), 363<sup>v</sup>·(Hosp. of St. John Baptist, Huntingdon),  
365<sup>r</sup>· (Huntingdon, St.Benedict), 370<sup>v</sup>·(Kelshall).
- 26 Appendix VII.
- 27 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. V, fo.6<sup>r</sup>·.
- 28 Ibid. fo. 8<sup>r</sup>·.
- 29 Ibid. fo.10<sup>v</sup>·.
- 30 Ibid. fo.15<sup>r</sup>·.
- 31 Ibid. fo.34<sup>r</sup>·.
- 32 Ibid. fo.35<sup>r</sup>·.
- 33 Ibid. fo. 37<sup>r</sup>·.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid. fo. 37<sup>v</sup>·.
- 36 Ibid. fo. 40<sup>v</sup>·.
- 37 Ibid. fo. 46<sup>v</sup>·.
- 38 Ibid. fo. 41<sup>v</sup>·.
- 39 Ibid. fo. 45<sup>v</sup>·.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid. fo.46.
- 42 Ibid. fo. 58<sup>v</sup>·.
- 43 Ibid. fo. 46<sup>v</sup>·.
- 44 Ibid. fo. 50<sup>r</sup>·.
- 45 Ibid. fo. 57<sup>r</sup>·.
- 46 Ibid. fo. 52<sup>v</sup>·.
- 47 Ibid. fo. 36<sup>v</sup>·.
- 48 Ibid. fo. 57<sup>v</sup>·.
- 49 Ibid. fo. 52<sup>r</sup>·.

- 50 Ibid. fo. 45<sup>r</sup>. It is possible that the rectory was in disrepair.
- 51 Ibid. fo. 53<sup>v</sup>.
- 52 The Register of Bishop Philip Repingdon 1405-1419, ed. M.Archer (3 vols. L.R.S., 57, 58, 74, 1963, 1982) I, 201.
- 53 Orme, English Schools, 306, 308, 311, 312, 316
- 54 Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, ed. J.S.Brewer et al. (8 vols., R.S., 1861-1891), II, Gemma Ecclesiastica, 120 ff.
- 55 E.E.A. Lincoln 1067-1185, ed. D.M.Smith (London, 1980), 83, no. 134.
- 56 H.de W., passim.
- 57 Ibid. i, 49-50.
- 58 Ibid. i, 67.
- 59 Ibid. iii, 34.
- 60 Ibid. iii, 35.
- 61 Ibid. iii, 37. See also my M.Phil.thesis, 133-4.
- 62 Ibid. iii, 39.
- 63 Ibid. iii, 41.
- 64 Ibid. iii, 42.
- 65 Ibid. iii, 47, 50.
- 66 Grosseteste, 291-292.
- 67 Ibid. 275.
- 68 Gravesend, 169.
- 69 Ibid. 184.
- 70 L.E.Boyle, Pastoral Care, Clerical Education and Canon Law 1200-1400 (London, 1981), VIII, 275.
- 71 John Bromyard, Summa Praedicatorum (Paris, 1500), 0 iv, 17:P.xiii 25, cited by L.E.Boyle, supra IX, 24.
- 72 L.A.O. Episc.Reg.II, fo. 310<sup>r</sup>. These words head the list of dispensations granted by John Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln, 1300-1320.
- 73 Ibid. fos. 310<sup>r</sup>-328<sup>v</sup>.

- 74 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. II, fos. 310<sup>r</sup>·, 310<sup>v</sup>· (bis), 311<sup>v</sup>·, 312<sup>r</sup>·, 314<sup>r</sup>·, 315<sup>r</sup>·, 315<sup>v</sup>·, 316<sup>v</sup>·, 317<sup>v</sup>· (bis), 318<sup>r</sup>· ( three entries), 319<sup>r</sup>·, 321<sup>v</sup>· (bis), 322<sup>r</sup>·, 322<sup>v</sup>· (bis), 323<sup>r</sup>·, 324<sup>r</sup>·; 326<sup>r</sup>· (bis), 327<sup>r</sup>· (bis), 327<sup>v</sup>·, 328<sup>r</sup>·, 328<sup>v</sup>·, 331<sup>v</sup>·, 332<sup>r</sup>·, 332<sup>v</sup>· (bis), 333<sup>r</sup>·.
- 75 Ibid. fo. 311<sup>v</sup>·.
- 76 Ibid. fos. 315<sup>r</sup>·, 317<sup>v</sup>·.
- 77 Ibid. fos. 317<sup>v</sup>·, 321<sup>v</sup>· (Hinxworth), fos. 322<sup>v</sup>·, 326<sup>r</sup>·, ( Yelling), fos. 332<sup>r</sup>·, 332<sup>v</sup>· (Yaxley).
- 78 Ibid. fo. 332<sup>r</sup>·, L.A.O. Episc. Reg. V, fo. 362<sup>r</sup>·.
- 79 Ibid. V, fos. 1<sup>r</sup>·-33<sup>v</sup>·, Dispensations Cum ex eo, Sept. 1320 - Dec. 1340.
- 80 Ibid. fos. 179<sup>r</sup>·-201<sup>v</sup>·.
- 81 Ibid. VII, fos. 124<sup>r</sup>·, 124<sup>v</sup>·, 125<sup>r</sup>·, 125<sup>v</sup>·, 126<sup>r</sup>·, 126<sup>v</sup>·, 127<sup>v</sup>·, 128<sup>r</sup>·. In parts some of these folios are indecipherable.
- 82 Ibid. IXC, 33-37. Page 26 is blank. Some of the entries are indecipherable.
- 83 Ibid. IX, fo. 49<sup>r</sup>· (Fenstanton); IXC, 34 (Yaxley), 35 (Langley).
- 84 Ibid. XII, fos. 11<sup>v</sup>· (Thurning), fo. 27<sup>v</sup>· (Bramfield), fo. 79<sup>r</sup>· (Water Newton), fo. 109<sup>v</sup>· (Conington), fo. 110<sup>v</sup>· ( Wood Walton).
- 85 B.R.U.O. I; xxxvii.
- 86 The Register of Bishop Repington 1405-1419, ed. M. Archer, ( 3 vols. L.R.S. 57, 58, 74, 1963, 1982), I, 112 (Gt. Berkhamstead), 118 (Ayot St. Lawrence), 150 (Glatton), 178 (Hatfield). (Hereafter, Repington).
- 87 Ibid. I, 37. On 5 July 1405 John Creeton , rector of St. Peter's, Great Berkhamstead, was granted a licence for one year's non-residence for study, and to let his church to farm.
- 88 Repington, I, 131. On July 30 1408 John Swain, rector of Cottered, was granted a licence for three years non-residence for study. II, 370. John Dalberd, rector of All Saints, Sawtry, was granted a licence for two years non-residence for study. Swanson, Church and Society, 66.

- 89 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XX,fo.86<sup>r</sup>.
- 90 An Episcopal Court Book, ed. M.Bowker(L.R.S. 61,1967),  
26.
- 91 Ibid. 28.
- 92 Councils and Synods, eds. D.Whitelock,M.Brett,C.N.L.  
Brooke (Oxford,1981) 1, Part II (1066-1204),747-8,  
774-9.
- 93 Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae Supplementum, 3,2,  
ad. 2. quoted by L.E.Boyle, Pastoral Care,IX,20.
- 94 Grosseteste Epistolae, ed. H.R.Luard (R.S. 1861),lii,  
154-156.
- 95 Ibid.
- 96 Wilkins, Concilia, i, 654.
- 97 English Historical Documents 1189- 1327, ed. H.Rothwell,  
(London,1975), 654-5.
- 98 M.Brett, The Church Under Henry I Oxford,1975), 221-2.
- 99 Frank Barlow, The English Church 1066-1154(London,1979),  
132ff.
- 100 G.M.Owst, Preaching In Medieval England(Cambridge,1926;  
reissued New York,1965), 10.
- 101 Repingdon, I,7.
- 102 Ibid. I,126.
- 103 Ibid. III,82, no.132.
- 104 Ibid. III,83,no.138.
- 105 Visitations, II,18.
- 106 Councils and Synods, eds. F.M.Powicke,C.R.Cheney ( 2  
vols. Oxford, 1964), II. Part 11, 900-901.
- 107 Robert of Brunne's Handlyng Synne, ed.F.J.Furnival (E.  
E.T.S.119, 123,1901,1903).
- 108 J.A.Mosher, The Exemplum in the Early Religious and  
Didactic Literature of England (Columbia,1911),94-100.
- 109 Middle English Sermons, ed.W.O.Ross (E.E.T.S.Orig.Ser.  
1940), 101, quoting from B.L.MS.Royal 18B xxiii.

- 110 Middle English Sermons, 85, lines 27-37.
- 111 'A 14th. Century Chronicle from The Grey Friars at Lynn', ed. A.Gransden, E.H.R. lxxii,(1957), 274.
- 112 Chronicon Henrici Knighton, ed. J.R.Lumby (R.S. 1889, 1895), ii, 63.
- 113 P.Ziegler, The Black Death (London,1969),165.
- 114 C.Platt, The Parish Churches of Medieval England (London, 1981),66.
- 115 P.Ziegler, The Black Death, 174.
- 116 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IX,fos.382<sup>v</sup>.-389<sup>v</sup>.
- 117 Ibid. fos. 382<sup>v</sup>,389<sup>r</sup>. The rectors of Upton,Godmanchester and Welwyn exchanged their livings. No reasons were given for the vacancies at Great Munden (fo.383<sup>r</sup>), Southoe(fo.383<sup>v</sup>),Aldbury(fo.383<sup>v</sup>),Paxton(fo.384<sup>r</sup>), Stilton (384<sup>v</sup>), Huntingdon St.Mary(fo.385<sup>v</sup>),Southoe for the second time(fo.385<sup>v</sup>), King's Ripton(fo.388<sup>v</sup>).
- 118 Ibid. fo. 382<sup>v</sup>. There is no evidence that he ever lived in the parish.
- 119 Ibid. fo. 389<sup>v</sup>.
- 120 Knighton, Chronicon, 116.
- 121 L.A.O. Episc.Reg. IX, fos. 410<sup>v</sup>.-414<sup>r</sup>.
- 122 Ibid. fos. 411<sup>r</sup>.- 412<sup>r</sup>.
- 123 P.Ziegler, The Black Death, 174.
- 124 J.L.Bolton, The Medieval English Economy 1150- 1500 (London, 1980), 56, 62-63; P.Ziegler, The Black Death, 227-9.
- 125 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IX, fo. 385<sup>r</sup>.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Ibid.fo.386<sup>v</sup>.
- 128 Ibid. fo.385<sup>v</sup>.
- 129 Ibid. 386<sup>r</sup>.
- 130 Bolton, Medieval English Economy, 210-11.
- 131 Ibid. 211.



- 132 D.Knowles, The Religious Orders In England( 3 vols. Cambridge, 1979), II, 13.
- 133 G.G.Coulton, Medieval Panorama (Cambridge, 1949),500.
- 134 Anglia Sacra, ed. H.Wharton, (2 vols.London,1691), i, 42, 375-6.
- 135 William Langland, Piers the Plowman (B text),ed.J.F. Goodridge (London, 1966), B. Prologue, 83.
- 136 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IX, fos. 383<sup>r</sup>·, 412<sup>v</sup>·.
- 137 Ibid. fos. 382<sup>v</sup>·,411<sup>v</sup>·.
- 138 Ibid. fos. 383<sup>v</sup>·, 412<sup>v</sup>·. A.Hamilton Thompson points out that the average period which elapsed between the death of the previous incumbent and the institution of his successor was at least a month. 'The Registers of John Gynwell, Bishop of Lincoln for The Years 1347-50', Archaeol. Journal , 68(1911), app. 1, 336f.
- 139 Knighton, Chronicon,63.
- 140 T.Amyot, 'Remarks on the Population of English Cities in the Time of Edward III', Archaeologia, xx(1821),531.
- 141 W.Lyndewood, Provinciale seu constitutiones Angliae ( Oxford, 1679), app. 58-9, quoted in The Black Death, ed. Rosemary Horrox (Manchester, 1994), 312.
- 142 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. IV,fo.380<sup>v</sup>·; IX, fo.411<sup>r</sup>·.
- 143 Ibid. fo.388<sup>r</sup>·, IX, fo. 412<sup>v</sup>·.
- 144 Ibid. IX, fo.384<sup>v</sup>·, X, fo.323<sup>v</sup>·.
- 145 Ibid. IV,fo.386<sup>r</sup>·, IX, fo.402<sup>v</sup>·.
- 146 Ibid. fo.365<sup>v</sup>·.
- 147 Ibid. fo.366<sup>v</sup>·.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. VI, fos. 104<sup>r</sup>·- 114<sup>r</sup>·.
- 150 Ibid. fos.106<sup>r-v</sup>·.
- 151 Ibid. IX, fo.380<sup>v</sup>·.
- 152 Ibid. fo. 381<sup>v</sup>·.
- 153 Ibid. X, fo. 284<sup>r</sup>·.

- 154 LA.O.Episc.Reg.X,fo.289<sup>v</sup>.
- 155 Ibid. fos.294<sup>v</sup>,305<sup>r</sup>.
- 156 Ibid. fo. 307<sup>r</sup>.
- 157 Ibid.XI,fo. 258<sup>r</sup>.
- 158 Ibid. fo.332<sup>v</sup>.(bis).
- 159 Ibid. fos.269<sup>r</sup>,270<sup>r</sup>,271<sup>r</sup>.
- 160 L.P.L. William Courtenay (1381-1396), 2, fo.226.
- 161 L.P.L. Thomas Arundel(1396-1397;1399-1414),1,fo.51<sup>v</sup>,  
Wilkins, Concilia, iii, 240.
- 162 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. XIII, fos.266<sup>v</sup>, 267<sup>v</sup>.
- 163 Ibid. fos. 271<sup>v</sup>-272<sup>r</sup>.
- 164 Ibid. 274<sup>v</sup>.
- 165 Ibid. XIV, fos. 322<sup>r</sup>-372<sup>r</sup>.
- 166 Ibid. fos. 325<sup>v</sup>,327<sup>v</sup>.
- 167 Ibid. fos.349<sup>v</sup>,352<sup>r</sup>.
- 168 Ibid. 353<sup>r</sup>.
- 169 Ibid.XVI, fos. 104<sup>r</sup>- 116<sup>v</sup>.
- 170 Ibid. fo.105<sup>r</sup>.
- 171 Ibid. fo.107<sup>r</sup>.
- 172 Ibid. XVII, fos. 76<sup>v</sup>.77<sup>r</sup>,78<sup>v</sup>,81<sup>r</sup>.81<sup>v</sup>.
- 173 Ibid. XVIII, fos. 164<sup>r</sup>.(3), 164<sup>v</sup>,165<sup>r</sup>.(bis),165<sup>v</sup>.(3),  
166<sup>r</sup>,166<sup>v</sup>,167<sup>r</sup>,168<sup>v</sup>,169<sup>r</sup>.(bis), 169<sup>v</sup>.(bis).
- 174 Ibid.fos.166<sup>r</sup>,166<sup>v</sup>.
- 175 Ibid. XX,fos. 297<sup>r</sup>-315<sup>v</sup>.
- 176 Ibid. fo. 305<sup>v</sup>.
- 177 Ibid. XXI, fos.111<sup>r</sup>,111<sup>v</sup>,112<sup>v</sup>,115<sup>r</sup>,115<sup>v</sup>,117<sup>v</sup>,119<sup>v</sup>.
- 178 Ibid. XXII,fos. 253<sup>r</sup>,256<sup>r</sup>,259<sup>r</sup>,260<sup>r</sup>,261<sup>r</sup>.
- 179 Ibid. XXIII, fo.382<sup>r</sup>.
- 180 Ibid. XXV, fo.382<sup>r</sup>.
- 181 Ibid. fo.56<sup>v</sup>.
- 182 Ibid. XXVII, fo. 241<sup>v</sup>.
- 183 Subsidy, 183.

- 184 P.Heath, The English Parish Clergy On The Eve Of The Reformation (London, 1969), 47.
- 185 J.J.Jusserand, English Wayfaring Life In The Middle Ages (London, 1891), 126.
- 186 Rotuli Parliamentorum ( No title page,1761-83),iii,501.
- 187 Visitations, I, 112.
- 188 Subsidy, 172.
- 189 Visitations, I, 12.
- 190 Subsidy, 172.
- 191 Ibid. 172,173,185,186, 189.
- 192 Repingdon, I, xxx, xxxi; II, 285.
- 193 C.Platt, The Parish Churches of Medieval England (London, 1981), 148-163.
- 194 R.N.Swanson, Church and Society in Late Medieval England (Oxford, 1989), 110-111.
- 195 The Valuation of Norwich ,ed. W.E.Lunt (Oxford,1926), 52-64.
- 196 Annales Monastici,ed.H.R.Luard (5 vols. R.S.36, 1864-9), i, 326; Valuation , W.E.Lunt, 65-7.
- 197 Wilkins, Concilia , ii. 19.
- 198 C.P.L, i, 449; Rose Graham,English Ecclesiastical Studies (London, 1929), 271-301.
- 199 T.Rymer, Foedera ( 20 vols. London, 1704-35),i,560,631;  
The Registers of Walter Bronescombe (A.D.1257-1280)and Peter Quivil (A.D.1280-1291) Bishops of Exeter,ed.F.C. Hingeston-Randolph (London and Exeter, 1889), 441.
- 200 Foedera, i,705;
- 201 Taxatio, 30.
- 202 Comparative figures are given in Appendix LI.
- 203 Graham, English Ecclesiastical Studies, 298.
- 204 Ibid. 301.
- 205 Subsidy, Intro. i-iv.
- 206 Ibid. 171.

- 207    Subsidy, 171.
- 208    Ibid.
- 209    Ibid. 172.
- 210    Chantry Certificates for Hertfordshire, ed. J.E.Brown,  
(Hertford, no date), 5, chantry cert. no.20, Aldbury
- 211    Subsidy, 172.
- 212    Ibid. 173.
- 213    Statutes of The Realm 1278-1714 (11 vols. Rec.Comm.  
1810-28), iii,493-9.
- 214    Valor Eccles. IV,276; Subsidy, 181-182; M.Bowker,  
The Henrician Reformation ( Cambridge,1981),132-137.
- 217    Taxatio, 35.
- 218    The parishes were Bengoe, Little Berkhamstead,Digswell,  
Great Wymondley,Everton,Hartford,Great Stukeley,  
Stanground,Denton and Caldecot.
- 219    Valor Eccles. IV,270.
- 220    Ibid.
- 221    Ramsey Chronicle, no.372; Ramsey Cartulary ii,no.291.  
Printed from P.R.O. El64/28 fo.191<sup>r</sup>. A.D.1184.
- 222    Subsidy 181-191.
- 223    Ibid. 181.
- 224    Ibid. 183,Valor Eccles.IV, 260.
- 225    Sutton, III, Intro. lv-lvi.; E.L.Cutts, Parish Priests  
And Their People (Reprint New York, 1970),290-293.
- 226    Sutton,III, 138 -139.
- 227    L.A.O. Episc.Reg. III, fo. 68<sup>v</sup>.
- 228    Ibid. fo. 273<sup>v</sup>.
- 229    Repingdon II, 296-298.
- 230    Ibid. III, 169-170.
- 231    L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XIV, fo.362<sup>r</sup>.
- 232    Repingdon III. 212-213.
- 233    L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XX, fo.306<sup>v</sup>.

- 234 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XX, fo.307<sup>r</sup>.; Subsidy, 184.
- 235 Ibid. 308<sup>v</sup>. , 309<sup>r</sup>.
- 236 Ibid. 312<sup>v</sup>.
- 237 Ibid.
- 238 Ibid. XXII, fo.253<sup>r</sup>.; Subsidy , 174.
- 239 Ibid. fo.254<sup>v</sup>.
- 240 Ibid. XXIII, fos. 352<sup>r</sup>. ,356<sup>v</sup>. ,363<sup>v</sup>. ,367<sup>r</sup>. ,369<sup>v</sup>. ,370<sup>r</sup>. ,  
373<sup>v</sup>. ,374<sup>v</sup>. - 375<sup>r</sup>. ,379<sup>r</sup>. ,380<sup>v</sup>. (bis), 381<sup>r</sup>. (bis), 381<sup>v</sup>. ,  
382<sup>r</sup>. (bis).
- 241 Ibid. fos. 363<sup>r-v</sup>.; XXIV, fo. 167<sup>v</sup>.; Subsidy, 172.
- 242 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. XXIII, fo. 375<sup>r</sup>.
- 243 Ibid. fo. 381<sup>r</sup>. , Subsidy, 178.
- 244 Ibid. XXV, fo.56<sup>r</sup>.
- 245 Ibid. fo. 58<sup>r</sup>.
- 246 Subsidy, 178.
- 247 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. XXV, fo.58<sup>r</sup>.
- 248 Ibid. fos.56<sup>v</sup>. , 58<sup>v</sup>.
- 249 Ibid. XXVII, fo. 243<sup>r</sup>.
- 250 Ibid. fos. 231<sup>r</sup>. - 250<sup>v</sup>.; Subsidy, 188.
- 251 Ibid. fo. 231<sup>r</sup>.; Subsidy, 188.
- 252 Ibid. fo. 236<sup>r</sup>.
- 253 Valor Eccles. IV, 276; Subsidy, 175.
- 254 L.A.O. Episc. Reg.XXVII, fo. 233<sup>v</sup>. ,
- 255 Subsidy, 174.
- 256 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. XXVII, fo. 234<sup>r</sup>.; Subsidy, 177.
- 257 C.P.R. 1391- 96 , 373. The rectory had been appropri-  
ated by the P. and C. of Dartford, and a vicarage  
had been ordained between 1399 and 1405. c.F. L.A.O.  
Episc. Reg. XIII, fo. 31<sup>v</sup>.
- 258 A.Hamilton Thompson, The English Clergy and Their  
Organization in the Later Middle Ages(Oxford,1947),  
206-7, Bishop Alnwick's Court Book, no 13 Huntingdon.

- 259 Thompson, The English Clergy , 207 n.2.
- 260 Ibid. 232 and n.3.
- 261 Ibid. 234.
- 262 Ibid. 235.
- 263 Ibid, 236.
- 264 Ibid. 235.
- 265 Ibid. 236.
- 266 Ibid. 237.
- 267 Visitations I,1-3.
- 268 Ibid. 2.
- 269 Ibid. 3.; L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXIII, fo. 371<sup>r</sup>.
- 270 Ibid. I, 1 and n.3.
- 271 Subsidy, 183 -185.
- 272 Visitations, I, 2.
- 273 Ibid. I,3.
- 274 Ibid.
- 275 Ibid.
- 276 Ibid. I, 6.; L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXIII, fo.358<sup>v</sup>.
- 277 Visitations, I, 7-8.
- 278 Ibid. 117.
- 279 Ibid. 117, 118.
- 280 Ibid. 100-102; 109-111,111;112-113.
- 281 Ibid. 102 and n.2; 101 ( Little Gaddesden).
- 282 Ibid. 110.
- 283 Ibid. 109-110; An Episcopal Court Book for the diocese of Lincoln 1514-1520 , ed. M.Bowker (L.R.S. 61,1967), 89, 96-97; L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXV, fo.6; B.R.U.C, 82; M.Bowker, The Secular Clergy In The Diocese of Lincoln, (Cambridge, 1968), App.IV, 194.
- 284 Visitations, I, 110.
- 285 Ibid. I, 111: Bowker, Secular Clergy. App.IV, 212. Mrs Bowker suggests that M.Thomas Thomson, the rector of

- Welwyn(Herts.) was probably at Cambridge; B.R.U.C.,582.
- 286 Visitations, I, 112-113; c<sup>j</sup>2fo.32; An Episcopal Court Book, 28 and n. 1.
- 287 An Episcopal Court Book, 96 and n.9; Visitations,I,113.
- 288 Visitations , I, 112.
- 289 Ibid.
- 290 Visitations, I,1-6, 109, 110-111, 112, 117.
- 291 Ibid. I, 1-2, 6, 101,111, 117.
- 292 Grosseteste, 277-282.
- 293 Visitations, II, 15.
- 294 Ibid. 16.
- 295 Ibid. 18.
- 296 C.J.Godfrey, 'The Non-residence of the Parochial Clergy in the Fourteenth Century', Church Quarterly Review, CLXII( London,1961), 445-6.
- 297 A.Hamilton Thompson,'Pluralism In The Mediaeval Church; with notes on Pluralists in the diocese of Lincoln,1366, A.A.S.R.P., 33(1915-16), 35.
- 298 Ibid. 36.
- 299 Ibid. 37.
- 300 Ibid.
- 301 English Historical Documents1189-1327, III,657. c.29.
- 302 A.Hamilton Thompson, Pluralism, 61ff.
- 303 C.J.Godfrey, 'Pluralists in the Province of Canterbury in 1366', J.E.H. 11, (1960), 23.
- 304 Ibid. 24-5.
- 305 A.Hamilton Thompson,'Pluralism', A.A.S.R.P. xxxiv., 3, 7,21,23,89;xxxv.206,208, 217, 220, 224,225,232, xxxvi, 3,5,8,16,26(bis),36; C.P.L. III. 570; C.P.P. 1, 407.
- 306 A.Hamilton Thompson,'Pluralism', A.A.S.R.P. xxxiv(1917) 3.
- 307 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. IX, fo.209<sup>v</sup>.

- 308 A.Hamilton Thompson, 'Pluralism', A.A.S.R.P., xxxiv. (1917), 21.
- 309 C.J.Godfrey, 'Pluralists in the Province of Canterbury', 40.
- 310 Councils & Synods, I, Pt.II(1066-1204), 619.
- 311 Ibid. 675, c. 5, 6, 7, 8; H.C.Lea, A History of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church, (London, 1907), i, 332.
- 312 Giraldi Cambrensis, Opera, ed. J.S.Brewer, J.F.Dimock, G.F.Warner, ( 8 vols. R.S. 21, 1861-91), ii, Gemma Ecclesiastica, Dist.ii,6.; Gerald of Wales, The Jewel of The Church, ed. J.J.Hagen (Leiden, 1979), 145.
- 313 Councils & Synods, II, Pt.1, 117.
- 314 H.de W. i, 96.
- 315 Ibid. i, 77.
- 316 Grosseteste, Epistolae, 157, no. lii.
- 317 Councils & Synods, II, Pt.11, 725.
- 318 Ibid. 851.
- 319 Repingdon, II, 371, fo. 98<sup>v</sup>.
- 320 Thompson, The English Clergy, App.III, Bishop Alnwick's Court Book, 232-233.
- 321 Ibid. 237, no.17, fo.4.
- 322 Ibid. 229-230.
- 323 Visitations, 1, 102.
- 324 Ibid. 118.
- 325 An Episcopal Court Book, 98.
- 326 Visitations, I, 111.
- 327 An Episcopal Court Book, 60, 96.
- 328 Councils & Synods, II, Pt. 1, 113.
- 329 Liber Antiquus, 26, fo. 8b.
- 330 Ibid. 28, fo.9a.
- 331 Gravesend, xxi; 180.



- 332 Sutton, VII, 3.
- 333 Ibid. 5, 20, 45. Thomas was ordained priest at Lincoln cathedral on 19 September 1293.
- 334 Ibid. 104, 110, 123. The record shows that Ralph was ordained deacon on 20 September 1298, and priest on 19 September, 199.
- 335 Ibid. 108, 117, 122.
- 336 Simon Townley, 'Unbeneficed Clergy in the Thirteenth Century: Two English Dioceses', Studies in Clergy and Ministry in Medieval England, ed. D.M. Smith (York, 1991) 42.
- 337 Ibid.
- 338 Sutton, VII, 15.
- 339 Thompson, The English Clergy, 122.
- 340 Clerical Poll-Taxes of the Diocese of Lincoln 1377-1381, ed. A.K. McHardy (L.R.S., 81, 1992), 97, no. 1148.
- 341 Ibid. no. 1155.
- 342 Ibid. no. 1157.
- 343 Ibid. 86-87.
- 344 Ibid. no. 1043, 1045.
- 345 Ibid. 87, no. 1052
- 346 Ibid. 86-87.
- 347 Ibid. 87-89.
- 348 Ibid. nos. 1071, 1067, 1062, 1065, 1068, 1072, 1073, 1070, Lilley, 1066, Chesfield.
- 349 Ibid. 89-91.
- 350 Ibid. Intro. xxix-xxxi.
- 351 Ibid. 94, nos. 1109, 1110.
- 352 Ibid. 95-96. Nos. 1129, 1130, 1131, 1139, 1134, 1138.
- 353 Ibid. 97, nos. 1150, 1152, 1153, 1154, 1155, 1156, 1156, 1157.
- Only two churches were recorded for St. Neots deanery: no. 1148, Offord D'Arcy, no. 1149, Abbotsley.
- 354 Ibid. 95. nos. 1117 - 1127.

- 355 Clerical Poll-Taxes, 95, no. 1120, Ashwell, no.1127, Therfield, nos. 1119,1121,1122, 1123,1126.
- 356 Subsidy, 171-191; 173 , Aldbury, Tring.
- 357 Ibid. 172, Great Berkhamstead, Tring, 173, Wheathampstead.
- 358 Ibid. 175-176.
- 359 Ibid. 176-179.
- 360 Ibid. 177, Ashwell; 179 Therfield.
- 361 Sutton, III, lii, Intro.
- 362 H.de W. II, 228- 229.
- 363 Ibid. 202-203.
- 364 Ibid. 255-256.
- 365 Ibid. 259-260.
- 366 Grosseteste, 258-259 (Hatfield), 260-262(Great Staughton), 265-266 (Hemel Hempstead).
- 367 Ibid. 258- 259. 'panis benedictus et aqua benedicta' . Daniel Rock,in The Church of Our Fathers , ed. G.W.Hart and W.H.Frere (London, 1905) i, 110-111, confirms the practice of the distribution of the eulogia or 'blessed bread' after Sunday Mass. It was blessed and cut with a special knife for distribution among the people, as an emblem of that brotherly love and union which ought always to bind Christians together, Presumably the water was needed to wash it down.
- 368 Grosseteste, 260-262; 265-266.
- 369 Gravesend, Intro. xxii.
- 370 Sutton, IV, 156.
- 371 Ibid. 46-47.
- 372 Robert Fox, The History of Godmanchester(London,1831), 259; Rot.Hund. ii, 592.
- 373 Ibid.
- 374 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. IV, fo.370<sup>v</sup>. N.Mimms; IV, fo.374<sup>r</sup>. Orton Waterville; IV, fo.389<sup>v</sup>.St.John. Huntingdon;

- L.A.O.Episc. Reg. XII, fo.389, Fen Stanton; Valor Eccles. IV, 263, Hilton; LV, 264, Great Gransden, LV, 269, Elton; IV, 260, Alconbury.
- 375 L.A.O. Episc. Reg. V, fo. 244<sup>V</sup>.
- 376 Repingdon, III, 173, no. 324.
- 377 P.R.O. Chantry Cert. 27, no.3; Chantry Certificates for Hertfordshire, ed. J.E.Brown, (Hertford n.d.) 5, Aldeburie infra Hundred Dacorum.
- 378 P.R.O.Chantry Cert. 27, no. 1.; Brown, Chantry Certs. 2-5, Aldenham.
- 379 Ibid. , Brown, Chantry Certs. 4 Aldenham, second chantry.
- 380 Ibid. no. 12; Brown, Chantry Certs. 14 Ashwell.
- 381 Ibid. no.5; Ibid. 7 Hatfilde Regis.(i.e.Hatfield)
- 382 Ibid. no. 7 and 9; Ibid. 10-12 Muche Monden; 13 Letchworthe.
- 383 Ibid. no.7; Ibid. 11, Muche Monden.
- 384 Subsidy, 178.
- 385 Valor Eccles. IV, 277; P.R.O.Chantry Cert. 27, no.9. Brown, Chantry Certs. 13 Letchworthe, Brook Free Chapel.
- 386 Ibid.
- 387 Ibid. no.12; Brown, Chantry Certs. 12 Watton At Stone.
- 388 Ibid. no. 18; Ibid. 27, Wallington.
- 389 Ibid. no. 20; Ibid. 28 Trynge. A morrowemasse preste was a priest whose one duty was saying Mass every morning.
- 390 L.A.O. Episc Reg. VI, fos. 139<sup>r-v</sup>; Wood Legh, Perpetual Chantries, 288-289; E.Duffy, The Stripping of The Altars(New Haven & London, 1992), 243, 256-7.
- 391 L.A.O.Episc. Reg. VI, fo.139<sup>v</sup>.
- 392 J.J.Scarisbrick, The Reformation and The English People, (Oxford, 1984), 19-26.
- 393 P.R.O. Chantry Cert. 27, no. 15; Brown, Chantry Certs. 50, Asshewell.

- 394 P.R.O. Chantry Cert. 27, no.13; Brown, Chantry Certs. 17, Ashwell fraternity.
- 395 Ibid. no. 14; Brown, Chantry Certs. 17, Baldock. Fraternity of Jesus.
- 396 C.P.L. XI, 618-619; Brown, Chantry Certs. 17-20. Gervase Rosser, 'Communities of Parish and Guild in the Late Middle Ages', Parish, Church and People, ed. Susan Wright (London, 1988), 28-46.
- 397 P.R.O. Chantry Cert. 27, no. 17; Brown, Chantry Certs. 25. Hychen, fraternitie.
- 398 C.P.R. 1467-1477, 542. The master and guardians had a common seal and the power of acquiring lands.
- 399 V.C.H. Hunts. II, 291-5 Godmanchester; L.A.O. Episc.Reg. X, fo.41; Fox, Hist.of Godmanchester, 247.
- 400 P.R.O. DL38/ 5.
- 401 Ibid.
- 402 Fox, Hist. of Godmanchester, 247-8.
- 403 Ibid. 268.
- 404 Hunt. Wills, VI, fo.59<sup>r</sup>.; V.C.H.Hunts. III, 247.
- 405 Ibid. II, fo.31; VI, fo.58(bis).
- 406 Ibid. IV, fo.133.
- 407 Ibid. VI, fo.79.
- 408 Ibid. VI, fo.48 (Tring), fos. 78-79 (Conington), III, fo.25 (Stilton).
- 409 Ibid. VI, fo. 48b.
- 410 J.J.Scarisbrick, The Reformation and the English People, (Oxford, repr, 1993), 31.
- 411 V.C.H. Herts. IV 305.
- 412 Subsidy, 179-180.
- 413 Ibid. 179, 182(bis), 183(bis), 186, 188 (bis), 190.
- 414 Ibid. 186.
- 415 Ibid. 188.

- 416 Rosser, Parish Church and People, ch.2, 30.
- 417 Duffy, The Stripping of the Altars, 144-145.
- 418 P.R.O. Chantry Cert. 27, no. 13 (Ashwell), Brown, Chantry Certs., 16-17.
- 419 Churchwardens' Accounts, ed. J.C.Cox (London, 1913), 38-39.
- 420 Early Churchwardens' Accounts of Bishops Stortford 1431-1558, ed. S.S.Doree (Herts.R.S. 10, 1994), 45, 59.
- 421 Churchwardens' Accounts, ed. J.C.Cox, 81-2; Duffy, The Stripping of The Altars, 146.
- 422 Hunt. Wills, i, fo.57.
- 423 Ibid. IV, fo. 108.
- 424 Duffy, The Stripping of The Altars, 243-4.
- 425 Hunt. Wills, VII, fo. 10b.
- 426 Ibid. VII, fo. 10b.
- 427 Ibid. I, fo. 57.
- 428 Ibid. III, fo.20.
- 429 P.R.O. Chantry Cert. 27, no.21 Ashwell lamp lands. Brown, Chantry Certs. 28-9.
- 430 Ibid. no. 22, Stevenage; no. 28 Great Wymondley; no.29 Little Munden ( two obits); no.34 Walkern( three obits);
- 431 Churchwardens' Accounts, ed. J.C.Cox, 160-161.
- 432 P.R.O.Chantry Cert. 27, no. 24; Brown, Chantry Certs, 29, Kelleshall.
- 433 The details of the twenty-eight churches have been taken from Brown's Chantry Certificates For Hertfordshire. pages 30 - 44. The churches are: St.Ippolit's, Lilley, Therfield, Sandon ( a lamp), Datchworth ( 2 obits), Radwell(light), Cottered, Little Wymondley, Wallington, Aspenden, Ayot St.Peter, Tewin (tapers), Little Berkhamstead (light), Essendon, Watton at Stone, Hatfield, Flamstead(3 lights), Wheathampstead and Harpenden chapel, Great Berkhamstead (light), Kensworth (light), Tring (light), Puttenham( 3 tapers), Northchurch(light), Shenley, Little Munden(light), Rushden,

Datchworth, and Mynesden chapel, near Hitchin. In addition the brotherhood at Hatfield has one tenement with a garden at Woodside, held by William Reve, and given to the use of the Brotherhood there.

- 434 Hunt. Wills, VI, fos. 121b -122.
- 435 Ibid. VI, for 59b.
- 436 Ibid. I, fo. 158.
- 437 Ibid. VI, fo. 216.
- 438 Ibid. IV, fo. 112.
- 439 Ibid. VII, fo. 10b.
- 440 Ibid. VI, fo. 216.
- 441 J.D. Alsop, 'Religious Preambles In Early Modern English Wills As Formulae', J.E.H. 40, (1989) , 19-27. J.J. Scarisbrick, The Reformation and the English People, 10-11, Duffy, The Stripping of The Altars, 508-9.
- 442 Repingdon, III, 2-3.
- 443 Duffy, The Stripping of The Altars 359.
- 444 Hunt. Wills, II, fo. 32.
- 445 Ibid. VI, fo. 41.
- 446 Ibid. III, fo. 53.
- 447 Ibid. VI, fo. 57b.
- 448 Ibid. II, fo. 183 (J.Wright); II, fo. 239 (J.Alcoke); IV, fo. 84 (W.Tailarde); IV, fo. 100 (W.Smyth); V, fo. 53 (J.Partriche); VIII, fo. 197 (R.Bromhall); VIII, fo. 153 (J.Smythe).
- 449 Ibid. VII, fos. 9b- 10.
- 450 Ibid. VII, fo. 15.
- 451 Ibid. IV, fos. 132b- 133.
- 452 Ibid. VI, fo. 273.
- 453 Ibid. VI, fo. 121.
- 454 Ibid. VIII, fo. 46.
- 455 Ibid. VII, fo. 147.

- 456 Hunt. Wills, III, fo.20.
- 457 Ibid. VIII, fo.201.
- 458 Ibid. VI, fos. 126b-127.
- 459 Ibid. II, fo.183.
- 460 Ibid. II, fo.239.
- 461 Ibid. IV,fo.84.
- 462 Ibid. VI,fo. 41.
- 463 Ibid. V,fo. 165b.
- 464 Ibid. VII, fos. 14 - 14b. The corporas or corporals  
are white linen squares used on the altar at Mass.
- 465 Ibid. IV,fos. 132b-133.
- 466 Ibid. VI, fos. 126b-127.
- 467 Ibid. VI, fo.214.
- 468 Ibid. III, fo.20.
- 469 Ibid. VI, fos. 42- 43; III, fo.53 - 53b.
- 470 E.J.Bicknell, A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-  
Nine Articles of The Church of England.(London, 1946),  
352-355.
- 471 Early Lincoln Wills , ed. A.Gibbons (Lincoln, 1888),185.
- 472 Hunt. Wills, II, fo. 234.
- 473 Ibid. II, fo. 239.
- 474 Ibid. VI, fo. 104.
- 475 Ibid. IV, fo. 132.
- 476 Ibid. VII, fo. 147.
- 478 Lincoln Diocesan Documents 1450-1544, ed. A.Clark,  
( E.E.T.S. Orig. Series 149, 1914),181-182.
- 479 Hunt. Wills, VII, fos. 197- 198.
- 480 L.A.O. Episc.Reg. XXVII, fo. 252<sup>r</sup>.
- 481 Hunt. Wills, VII, fo.151.
- 482 Ibid. VI, fo.175.
- 483 Ibid. IV, fo.61.
- 484 Ibid. VI, 273.

- 485 Hunt. Wills, III, fo. 20
- 486 Ibid. IV, fos. 111b-112.
- 487 C. Wordsworth, H. Littlehales, The Old Service Books of The English Church (London, 1904), 139- 142.
- 488 L. Boyle, ' The Oculus Sacerdotis and Some Other Works of William of Pagula', T.R.H.S., 5 th. series V, (1955), 95.
- 489 Hunt. Wills, IV, fos. 111b-112.
- 490 Ibid. VI, fo. 121.
- 491 Ibid. VIII, fo. 46.



## The Church and The Laity

Several thousand churches had been built since the Conquest, most of them perhaps in the hundred years between 1150 and 1250. It was in this period, writes W.G. Hoskins, that the divisions of England into ecclesiastical parishes was completed, and the parish church arose as a visible symbol and centre of a new community.<sup>(1)</sup> Many of these parish churches were small and unpretentious structures with a simple nave and chancel built of rubble masonry from a local stone-pit. A perfect example of this type of church is to be found at Bengoe near Hertford, which possesses Saxon features in its workmanship. Thirteenth century paintings for the instruction of the faithful adorn its walls.

Whether the church be small or large it became a powerful influence as the local priest and his ministry touched the lives of the people from the cradle to the grave. A permanent reminder that people were expected to attend their church may be found in the numerous scratch or mass dials to be found both in Huntingdonshire and Hertfordshire.<sup>(2)</sup> The dials reveal that the third, sixth and ninth hours of the day were the first concern of the parish priest. Consequently, we usually find these three lines present on most dials. The third hour line became additionally important as being the accepted time for celebrating Mass. A good example may be found at Bengoe.<sup>(3)</sup>

No source for the archdeaconry states precisely what was to be done in the parish churches and chapels, but it is certain that at least one daily Mass was said. In addition, as Mrs. Owen has pointed out, on Sundays before

High Mass, the celebrant blessed the holy water for the coming week's use and after Mass was over blessed and distributed to all present loaves of bread known as the 'eulogia' or blessed bread. It was originally part of the oblation which had been left unconsecrated. It was blessed and cut with a special knife for distribution among the people, as an emblem of that brotherly love and union which ought always to bind Christians together.<sup>(4)</sup> Unfortunately, it did not always do this. At Atwater's visitation, conducted by his commissary, M. John Grene, in 1518 it was reported that at Hartford church John Kareles took so much of the blessed bread that other parishioners went without.<sup>(5)</sup>

The weekly Mass and its two associated ceremonies of the blessing of the holy water and the distribution of the blessed bread played an important part in the lives of ordinary parishioners. This is demonstrated in the provision made by Grosseteste in Walter de Godarrevill's chapel at Hatfield which had no sacraments except Mass, that holy bread and water should be available.<sup>(6)</sup>

Similar arrangements were made at Delington in the parish of Staughton and at Robert de Hayham's chapel at Hayham in the parish of Hemel Hempstead.<sup>(7)</sup>

No opportunity seems to have been given for the communion of the laity except at Easter. Annual communion, which was a canonical requirement, represents the culmination of a long decline from the practice of the primitive Church, in which lay communion accompanied every Mass.<sup>(8)</sup> However, every parishioner knew that when the priest came to the words, 'Hoc est Corpus Meum' that Christ was truly present. No one doubted that whether the priest's life was strict or lax, he had the key of the unseen world and could make 'God's

Body'.

The Mass was offered in Latin, and so was largely meaningless to the uninstructed and the unlettered. Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in his Gemma Ecclesiastica, says, 'In hearing Mass everyone should show this reverence, to apply his mind to the work, to think of God only, so that the words 'Sursum corda habeamus Dominum' may be fulfilled. When the Gospel is read they should not sit (presumably upon the floor, since seats were largely unknown in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries), but standing reverently with the body inclined, should listen. After the Gospel let those offer who have the will, according to the words, "Let them not appear empty before my face". Let them not presume to leave until after the priest has raised his hands in blessing'.<sup>(9)</sup>

Baptism was believed to be vital to the salvation of a child's soul. Consequently, holy water was kept at hand in the locked font so that a newborn child might be brought on the day of its birth to Baptism.<sup>(10)</sup> How common this was is uncertain, but even in Anglo-Saxon times every infant was brought to the font within thirty or thirty-seven days after birth, under a heavy penalty.<sup>(11)</sup> The solemn celebration of the sacrament on the eve of Easter and of Pentecost continued, and children who were born not more than eight days before the festivals were reserved for those occasions; but at all other times baptism followed birth with the shortest possible interval.<sup>(12)</sup>

Confirmation concerned the parish priest very little. No preparation was given, as the rite was administered when the children were very young. Parents were warned to bring their children to the bishop at the first opportunity and

at the latest within seven years after birth under pain of suspension from Christian privileges.<sup>(13)</sup> Moorman points out that the neglect of this sacrament shown by some bishops must have meant that many people were confirmed only later in life, if at all.<sup>(14)</sup> Robert Grosseteste (1235-1253) certainly took the sacrament seriously. In his visitation of the diocese the clergy were expected to be present in deaneries and the people to hear the word of God and to bring their children to be confirmed.<sup>(15)</sup>

The most intimate link between priest and people was in the sacrament of penance which was obligatory on all Christians at the beginning of Lent. Heavy stress was placed on the importance of confessing at least once a year at the Lateran Council of 1215. As has already been shown a number of works were written not only to help the parish priest with his sermons but also to hear confessions. The most important aim of these seems to have been to remind the layman of his sinfulness. It was not enough just to go to confession, as repentance, faith and good resolution were also necessary.<sup>(16)</sup> Bromyard describes how careless penitents' come suddenly to confession, as though they were in a mood of cheerful levity, and say, "Question me!" ' He also cites the case of one who has not been to confession for a whole year and who hurries into church, saying, 'Hear me at once, I shall be very quick: I have only one word to say!'<sup>(17)</sup>

The parish priest was required to help the penitent to make a full and open confession, not 'wrapped in silk' by interrogating him about his involvement in the cardinal sins and the sins of the five senses.<sup>(18)</sup> In addition he had to examine him closely on his knowledge of the

Paternoster and of each article of the creed.

The principal sign of contrition ,or true sorrow for sin, was the penitent's low heart and weeping eyes. The parish priest and any confessor could pronounce absolution only if he was certain that sorrow was present. The penance meted out was likely to consist of prayers, fastings, or almsdeeds. The penitent was given to understand that if he did too little penance on earth, his term in purgatory would be correspondingly longer.

Only occasionally do we learn of the general theory underlying penance and indulgences, which every parish priest presumably would know. In a treatise like 'The Prick of Conscience' reference is made to the concept of the treasury of grace stored up by the merits of Christ and the saints to which the Church holds the keys. It is by drawing on this treasury that the priest is able to absolve the penitent. (19)

At the point of death there was the visitation of the sick. When called to visit the sick the priest went with his ministers to the house, saying on the way the seven penitential psalms. On entering the house , the priest proceeded to examine the sick person as to his faith; he then exhorted him to charity and patience, heard his confession. gave him absolution, concluding with prayers and a blessing, The unction or anointing with oil of the sick followed. Lastly, the priest prayed for the restoration of the sick to spiritual and bodily health. After unction the sacrament of the Body of Christ was exhibited to the sufferer, and he was asked whether he believed the true Body and Blood of Christ to be present under the form of bread: upon his assent ,he was communicated, unless

circumstances prevented him from receiving, when the priest was bidden to say, " Brother, in this case it suffices for thee to have a true faith and good will; believe only, and thou hast eaten".<sup>(20)</sup> It was a prime concern of the clergy that the Church's sick members should not die without the last sacraments or receive them without instruction and preparation. English synods forbade the parish priest to pass a single night away from his parish without reasonable cause, or without a deputy.<sup>(21)</sup>

D. Rock draws a picture of the medieval rector or vicar proceeding to the house of the sick, sometimes with a procession of surpliced clerks, with uplifted cross, tinkling handbell, and lighted taper, while the country folk kneel as he passes, and join their prayers with the Gregorian tones which accompany the penitential psalms. At other times, when called to some poor cottage among the hills or accessible only by rugged roads, the village priest would mount his horse, with the pyx in a silk bag slung round his neck, and a single lighted taper in a lantern with a bell attached to it, suspended from the neck of his horse.<sup>(22)</sup>

For most of the laity, if not all, there was also the sacrament of marriage. The banns were repeated on three, not consecutive holy days, during Mass. If no objection was alleged, the priest would proceed with the following words in the mother tongue: 'N, wylt thou haue this woman to thy wyfe and loue her and kepe her, in syknes and in helthe, and in all other forsake for her: and holde thee only to her, to thy lyues ende ?

Respondeat vir hoc modo: 'I wyll'.<sup>(23)</sup>

The ceremony was invariably performed in the church porch, where there was a porch, otherwise at the door. Professor Brooke has pointed out that many early churches possessed no porch; in Anglo-Saxon churches porches were an occasional not a normal feature of early churches in England.<sup>(24)</sup> After the espousals, the party entered the church and proceeded to the altar step, the priest and his ministers saying as they went the psalm 'Beati omnes'. The formal benediction of the marriage was given between the consecration and the communion. The pax was offered by the priest to the bridegroom and by him to the bride. After mass they partake together of bread and wine which have been blessed, and so depart, the priest visiting the house afterwards and blessing them there.<sup>(25)</sup>

Finally, there was for everyone the last rites. Here the medieval Church surpassed herself in the wealth of her devotions in the Order for the Burial of the Dead. After death, the body would be washed and spread upon a bier: vespers for the day would be said, followed by the vigils of the dead, the special vespers and special mattins commonly known from their respective antiphons as the Placebo and the Dirige or 'dirge'. The body was then carried in procession to the church, accompanied by a cross-bearer and acolytes with lighted tapers, a man with a bell going before the corpse to invite the prayers of the passers-by. The priest and his ministers, in albs, would follow singing the psalms. Friends of the family of the deceased followed the body. There the body would remain until the next day. After breakfast, the solemn Mass or requiem would be sung. The friends of the deceased would usually offer a Mass penny. After Mass all would proceed to the burial.

The grave, of which the priest had previously cut the first sod, would be opened with psalm 'Confitemini, Domino, quia bonus!'. Then the grave, having been blessed and aspersed, prayers for the departed followed, and the priest gave the final absolution. (26)

The obsequies of most people would have followed this pattern with little variation. Those who could afford it made provision for more than the regulation single requiem. Among the latter were Nicholas Claybrook of Stilton, Robert May of Warboys, John Lake of Tring, Thomas Cook of Hertford, Thomas Walker of Holywell, William Nasthe of Welwyn, Agnes Pulter of Broughton (27) who provided for trentals of masses to be said or sung for their souls and the souls of their families and friends. In addition Agnes Pulter made provision for Sir John to say five masses of 'the five wounds'. He is to receive twenty pence. (28) Eamon Duffy has pointed out that all those involved in one's obsequies, whether as executor, officiant, or recipient of alms should be 'true Cristen peple', in grace and charity with God and neighbours, and moved by charity in praying for one's soul. Thus there are a number of injunctions in wills that the priests celebrating the obsequies should be 'honest', a 'sad and devout priest' (29). Among those asking for an honest priest were William Nasthe of Welwyn and Elene Bayse of Great Catworth who provide ten shillings, the standard sum,

Thomas Wylshere of Willian left £6 for his honest priest to sing and say Mass for his soul and his good friends souls for a whole year next after his decease. (30) Thomas Barforte of Bengoe, in his will of 1533, left instructions for his son William 'to bestow yearly at his



own proper cost during the term of his life three shillings and fourpence sterling for his obit or yearly mind to be done in the church of Bengoe'. He also left fourpence to the bede-roll.<sup>(31)</sup>

Those who were members of guilds or fraternities quite naturally expected the members to be involved in their obsequies. John Lake of Tring bequeaths to 'the brotherhood of the Blessed Trynyte of Trynge a trentall of masses to be said for me and all my good friends soulls'.<sup>(32)</sup> No mention is made of payment, as one of the functions of the priest who was chaplain of such a guild would be to say mass for the repose of his soul. John More of Fenstanton left a bushel of barley to the Brotherhood of Our Lady and John North of Conington bequeathed a bushel of barley to the Guild of the Blessed Trinity in 1536 in the hope that these guilds would arrange their obsequies. Members of the guild would be at their funerals in any case. Henry Bosworth of Yaxley left fourpence to the Guild of the Holy Trinity.<sup>(33)</sup>

John Amcell of Welwyn, who died in 1542, was very detailed in his instructions for his obsequies. Br. George of Watton (at Stone) is to sing five Masses of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, for the sum of twenty pence. He provided a further twenty pence for Br. Lamkyn to sing five Masses of the Name of Jesus. John Myles of Codicote is to receive three shillings and fourpence to see that he is 'honestlie brought to the erthe and my monethe day kepte'.<sup>(34)</sup>

The wills of the fifteenth century and early sixteenth reveal how much the laity relied on the religious orders to pray for their souls. In his will of 1409 John Huntingdon left sums of money to the following abbeys: Barlings,

de Vallis Dei (Edenham parish), Thorney, the nuns of Stamford, the friars at Boston, the Augustinian friars at Lynne in Norfolk, and gifts to numerous churches. In addition to the prayers expected from the above-mentioned legatees, he provided £15 for three chaplains to celebrate Masses for him for one year. Three chaplains were also to receive six marks to celebrate a trental of Masses of St. Gregory.<sup>(35)</sup> This Mass, like that of the Wounds of Christ, was very popular in the late Middle Ages throughout Europe. According to the legend, Pope Gregory, while celebrating Mass in the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, had experienced a vision of Christ, seated on or standing in his tomb, displaying his wounds and surrounded by the implements of the Passion.<sup>(36)</sup>

In his will of 1491 Edward Stanton alias Grene of Great Staughton left £1 6s. 8d. to the prior and convent of Stonely and a similar sum to prior and convent of St. Neots for Masses. In addition, Robert Potter, a summoner, is to receive twenty pence for five Masses.<sup>(37)</sup> Similarly, Constance Knight, a lady of substance, of Great Gaddesden, gave two bushels of wheat to the friars of Hitchin and four bushels to the friars of Dunstable, in her will of 1496.<sup>(38)</sup>

The friars of Hitchin appear to have been popular with a number of testators, as those living outside the diocesan boundaries, but within the jurisdiction of the great abbey of St. Albans, also gave to them. Thus John Merston, in his will of 1487, not only made a gift to Hitchin parish church, but also twelve pence to the friars at Hitchin.<sup>(39)</sup> While Thomas Catlyn, in 1491, left ten shillings to the Hitchin friars for a trental of St. Gregory Masses.<sup>(40)</sup> William Gomond left 3s. 4d. to the 'white freres in Hitchin' to pray

for his soul.<sup>(41)</sup> Diocesan boundaries were unimportant when prayers for the wealth or health of one's soul were concerned. Thus, Thomas Cook of St. John's parish, Hertford, gave ten shillings to the friars of Ware, which was in the diocese of London, for a trental of Masses. On the other hand, it was a natural thing to request, as Ware was only two miles away from Hertford.

In addition, a few testators left money for doles of cash and food to be given to the poor. In a random selection of 100 lay wills made between 1453 and 1550 only ten per cent made any reference to the poor. Agnes Pulter of Broughton, in her will of 1545, made the request that 'there shall be given to poor people of this town every year by the space of three years 3s. 4d. by year'.<sup>(42)</sup>

William Andrew of Little Munden, in a will made in 1543, bequeathed five shillings to be distributed amongst the poor people for the 'wealth of my soul and all Christian souls'. His daughter was to receive the money from her elder brother John 'by the space of ten years, every year five shillings, to dispose of it as aforesaid'.<sup>(43)</sup> Thomas Barforte of Bengoe, in 1534, after making detailed provision for prayers and Masses for the repose of his soul, left 'to iiij needy poor people of the same parish or next to the same dwelling 4d., and the residue in bread and ale as far as it will extend yearly in the said church during the term above named'. This was during his son William's lifetime.<sup>(44)</sup>

Regnold Sybley, who died in 1535, at Hail Weston in the parish of Southoe, after making numerous bequests to his church, wanted 'a drinking at my burial day, and seven days and thirty days afterwards to refresh the poor people withal'.<sup>(45)</sup>

Eleanor Bayse of Great Catworth, in her will of 1543, left an unspecified sum 'to every man, woman and child being at my burial'.<sup>(46)</sup>

Other vague references are made in several wills: Agnes, the wife of Thomas Gaddisbye of Godmanchester, is directed in his will of 1547 'to dispose for him as she shall think most expedient for the welfare of his soul'.<sup>(47)</sup> William Tokfield of Great Berkhamstead, in his will of 1529, directs that 'the residue of goods not bequeathed I give to Thomas Tokfield, my son, to distribute for my soul and all Christian souls'.<sup>(48)</sup> Elizabeth Scott of Broughton, in her will of 1542, asks that the 'rest of my goods to be bestowed after the discretion of master parson and Anthony Brown for my soul's wealth'.<sup>(49)</sup> However, it has been stated that even where common doles are not expressly stipulated in a will, they can be presumed to have been as routine as the requiem mass offered for every dead Christian.<sup>(50)</sup>

Wills made after 1547 are more specific. John Smyth of Elton, in 1548, gave to the poor man's chest.<sup>(51)</sup> While Joan Ireland of Hemingford Grey, in 1549, gave instructions that goods were to be sold and the proceeds from the sale were to be used to buy a cow or two, and the rent from their use was to be given to the poor folk of Hemingford Grey.<sup>(52)</sup> Richard Adamson of the parish of All Saints, Huntingdon, in 1550 left 6s. 8d. to the relief of the poor in the parish of All Saints, to be divided at the discretion of the curate and the churchwardens.<sup>(53)</sup> Although by this time obit provisions had been abolished, testators may still have hoped for the prayers of the faithful.

In almost every will, the testator acknowledges his or her allegiance to the mother church of the diocese by a small bequest, usually 2d. or 4d. to the repair fund of the cathedral at Lincoln. Duty to the parish church was also recognized by bequests to the high altar, to the repair fund, or to particular images or lights in the church. Bequests to the high altar were often stated to be in amends of 'forgotten tithe'. Thus Henry Bosworth of Yaxley gave to the high altar for tithes forgotten 4d. in 1536.<sup>(54)</sup> Similarly Richard Watson bequeathed 2s. to the high altar of Somersham church 'for tithes and offerings forgotten' in 1539.<sup>(55)</sup> John Body of Caldecot is not certain, but bequeathes 12d. to the high altar 'for tithes if any were negligently omitted by me.'<sup>(56)</sup> Many others bequeath sums of money in the same vein.

Occasionally, a testator is found giving his executors directions as to payment of a mortuary for him. Sometimes a testator assigns a particular animal. Thus William Pers of Yaxley in his will of 1508 bequeathes 'my best beast after the custom and manner there'.<sup>(57)</sup> Nicholas Clay - broke of Stilton in 1527 also bequeathes his best beast 'after the use and custom of the town'.<sup>(58)</sup> Robert Button of Steeple Gidding also bequeathes his best beast for his mortuary in 1527.<sup>(59)</sup> Robert May is more specific, and gives his best horse as his mortuary to Warboys church in 1527.<sup>(60)</sup> Sometimes, a testator leaves it to be determined 'according to custom'. Thomas Beetreth of Wood Walton in 1528 'bequeaths to my mortuary as right and custom doth require'.<sup>(61)</sup> Very few references to a mortuary are found in the Huntingdon wills after 1530.

This was largely due to the fact that the payment of mortuaries was determined by the statute passed by Parliament in 1529. It enacted that, after 1st April 1530, no mortuary should be asked otherwise than as this Act allowed. Among the provisions of the Act no mortuaries might be asked except in parishes where it had been usual for mortuaries to be asked and paid. Personal bequests made by a testator to the clergy were excluded.<sup>(62)</sup>

A few were able to make gifts to their churches apart from donations to the upkeep of lights etc. Edward Stanton of Great Staughton in his will of 1491 gave eighty marks for the purchase of an antiphoner for use in Great Staughton parish church<sup>(63)</sup> Thomas Hadstoke of Hitchin left money in his will of 1453 for the purchase of two antiphonaries.<sup>(64)</sup>

Elaborate instructions were given in Constance Knight's will of 1496. She gave a coffer to stand in St. Katherine's aisle in Great Gaddesden church. It was to be used for the Mass books and altar linen for Mass. The priest who was to sing the Mass was to have the keys and the churchwardens if no priest could be found. In addition she provided a lavabo towel and a sheet for the altar of St. Peter to be painted 'to do worship to St. Peter and St. Katherine'.<sup>(65)</sup>

Agnes Goodgame of Great Gransden in her will of 1545 left instructions to her executors 'that my six silver spoons be sold and with the money thereof trimming to be bought and a crown for the canopy of the blessed sacrament in Gransden aforesaid'.<sup>(66)</sup>

Others provided money for the repair of the highways: Agnes Pulter bequeathed 6s 8d. in 1545 to the mending of

the highway within the town(Broughton) where it shall be thought most need'.<sup>(67)</sup> Thomas Lake gave 3s. 4d. to the repairs of the highway called Ritter land,<sup>(68)</sup> and John Smyth of Elton (Aylton) in 1545 bequeathed 2d. to the bridge at Oundle.<sup>(69)</sup>

Dr.Duffy has pointed out that the testators providing for such works made no distinction between them and works of mercy.<sup>(70)</sup> In Oliver Sutton's episcopate forty days indulgence for three years were granted to all who contributed towards the repairs of Huntingdon bridge, which had been washed away in a flood. The indulgence ,which was issued in April 1294, meant that the temporal punishment believed to be due to God after a sin had been repented, confessed and forgiven, had been remitted. An indulgence was believed to shorten the torments of purgatory.<sup>(71)</sup>

Indulgences or pardons became a means of raising money for charitable works and good causes. The precedent for giving to good causes had thus been well established. The demand for indulgences was increased by the act of Boniface VIII, who decreed that those who visited Rome in the year 1300 and every hundredth year following should, if penitent and having made their confession, obtain the fullest remission of their sins (plenissimam suorum veniam peccatorum).<sup>(72)</sup>

On 10 July 1301 the archdeacons of Bedford and Huntingdon were asked by the bishop ( Dalderby) to commend an alms collection for Hockliffe(Hoclive) hospital. Those who assisted would be assured of an indulgence of thirty days.<sup>(73)</sup> On 21 September 1307 an indulgence of twenty days was

promised to those helping the lepers in the house at Wansford (Northants.). Bishop Dalderby had written to the archdeacons of Huntingdon and Northampton or their officials to encourage the matter in their archdeaconries.<sup>(74)</sup>

Prayers for the departed were also solicited . Indulgences of twenty or thirty days were promised to those who prayed for William of Baldock, his wife Matilda, and son, William, buried in Baldock churchyard,<sup>(75)</sup> and for Nicholas and Ydonea, his wife, buried in Stevenage churchyard.<sup>(76)</sup>

Indulgences of thirty days were granted to all who went to hear the preaching of M.Robert of Keighley, S.T.P., and who also confessed their sins on 9 August.1314.<sup>(77)</sup> A similar indulgence was granted in the following year to those who<sup>(78)</sup> went to hear Hugh of Nottingham, rector of Hatfield, preach.

Not many indulgences were granted during Philip Repingdon's episcopate(1405-19), chosen as an example from the fifteenth century. An unusual one is cited.On 14 July 1413 a grant of forty days indulgence was promised to all who recited the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary before the altar of the Holy Trinity in Hitchin parish church.<sup>(79)</sup> These are but a selection of the many indulgences granted for various reasons throughout the Middle Ages

### **Lay Fraternities and Guilds**

Reference has already been made to the numerous fraternities and guilds which existed in a number of parishes in the Huntingdon archdeaconry. Undoubtedly,they enriched the lives of the parishioners. Their main function was the maintenance of lights before images and the Blessed Sacrament. Whenever possible members of the guild or fraternity



were expected to attend the obsequies of fellow members.  
John Lake of Tring asks that the Brotherhood of the Blessed Trinity of Tring will arrange for a trental of masses to be said for him, (80) as has already been shown.

Evidently, from time to time dissensions arose between the clergy. It appears that the incumbent of Great Berkhamstead and George Prior a 'brotherhood priest' could not agree. The parson complained to the bishop of Lincoln that 'Prior was a comyn baratur and braker of the kynges peas... a comyn goar and seker of suspersyers(suspicious ?) and baudy howsys ..... a pleyer at carolls and all unlawfull gamys'. Prior, it seems, was summoned before the bishop and with thirty-one of his 'neighburs gentyllmen and other substantial men' rode to Woburn to refute the charge. The bishop bound him over, but this did not satisfy the parson and Prior finally appealed to the Crown for redress. (81)

On the whole the parish guilds supplemented the established activities of parish priest and church, and were not viewed as an alternative to or in competition with the parish church. They tried to make social life a little more pleasant by promoting good fellowship among members who clearly valued their membership, as so many wills testify.

Membership of one guild was not enough for some people, as the wills show that they were concerned with a number. John Best supported seven guilds at Yaxley. Two were particularly important to him, it would appear, as he bequeathed 12d. each to the Guild of the Holy Trinity and the Guild of St. John Baptist, but 6d. each to the Guilds of St. Katherine, St. Peter, the Holy Cross, St. George and St. Giles. (82)

William Bond of Great Gidding, apart from the support which he gave to his own parish church, also supported the church at Glatton. In his will of 1501 he gave 40d. each to the guild of the Holy Trinity and to the guild of St. Mary, both in Glatton church. (83)

Unfortunately, we cannot know how many guilds there were or how much they influenced conduct or how great was their contribution to the economic life of their communities. A list is given in the appendices of the existence of such guilds and fraternities that have been found in the arch-deaconry.

#### Belief and Practice

Atheism and scepticism were exceedingly rare in medieval England. The doctrines of Christianity were accepted as a matter of course. As Professor Hill says, 'the authority of the Church was, at least in theory, respected, and people believed in the validity of canon law although they often broke it. While people could accept unquestioning the teaching of their parish priest they might still behave with ferocious brutality towards him if they happened to dislike him.' (84)

Evidently, Peter of Bluntisham, clerk, had annoyed some of his people, as those who had assaulted him suffered a sentence of general excommunication. This was to be published by the dean of Huntingdon after April 4, 1294. (85) Those who presumed to infringe the rights of the church also brought excommunication upon themselves. Thus in 1295 a mandate was issued to the deans of Huntingdon and St. Ives to take with them a suitable number of clergy and excommunicate, in the churches of Great and Little Stukeley and in

other churches of their deaneries, all those who refused to pay tithes to or interfered with the spiritualities of the church of Great Stukeley, which was appropriated to the priory of St. Mary, Huntingdon. (86)

The collection of tithes proved to be a problem for a number of clergy from time to time. On 31 August, 1302 the dean of Yaxley excommunicated all those who had stolen corn etc. from the rector of St. Andrew's Church, Sawtry and who had impeded the collection of tithes. (87) Sometimes it proved to be difficult for an incumbent to enter upon his work. On 5 October, 1310 the archdeacon of Huntingdon's official was instructed to warn and, if necessary, to excommunicate those occupying Yelling church thus preventing M. Richard de Aulton from taking corporal possession of the benefice. (88) A similar event had taken place in Southoe church at an earlier date, as the dean of St. Neots had to excommunicate those occupying the church after the death (89) of the previous incumbent, Ralph of Cambridge in 1303.

Fortunately, not all relations between priest and people were hostile. Occasionally, a priest would be required to give sanctuary. A man or woman, guilty of a crime and sometimes not, yet wishing to escape the ordinary process of the law or in the case of murder, the primitive justice of the friends and relatives of the victim, could seek the protection of the Church. The actual goal was usually the church porch where the ring on the main door could be held and so the criminal could claim sanctuary. Here, in theory, he was safe for forty days. The records for a number of villages in Cambridgeshire for 1260-1380, for example, show that the longest period of sanctuary was fourteen days. (90) During that time the church would be in a

state of siege. On the arrival of a coroner, the criminal would be given the choice of surrendering to the king's peace or agreeing to abjure the realm.<sup>(91)</sup>

The violation of sanctuary was taken very seriously as may be seen from the following examples found in bishop John Dalderby's register. Andrew Baron of Haughness had taken refuge in Stevenage churchyard whence he was forcibly removed by Robert Gentil; Peter Shephird, Roger Coukird, Nicholas of Bedwell, Nicholas Carter, Robert Attenasche of Stevenage. They had been excommunicated by the bishop. A memorandum to the archdeacon of Huntingdon's official on March 16, 1311 informed him that they had been absolved and had been given a penance to walk barefoot and capless, with sleeveless shirts only, carrying the arms with which they had assaulted their victim, each Sunday till Pentecost, except Easter, round Stevenage church and to be beaten on the shoulders. They were also to stand on the market days before the public at Hitchin and to be beaten by the vicar of that place.<sup>(92)</sup>

On August 15, 1311 a memorandum was sent to the dean of Hertford, informing him that John le Newman of Sutton, a clerk, and Richard le Hayward of Sawbridgeworth, had sought sanctuary in All Saints Church, Hertford, from which they were dragged and wounded. William of Hitchin, the priest who was present at the time, and warned the invaders of the danger of violating the sanctuary, was also assaulted with clubs and cudgels. The dean was to inquire into the incident, find out who was responsible and cite them to appear before the bishop.<sup>(93)</sup>

Breach of sanctuary was probably more common than the

surviving records suggest. The Church took such cases seriously and breach of sanctuary was punished with automatic excommunication of the perpetrators.

### **Heresy**

For the most part the country as a whole was free of heresy before 1380. As Dr. Swanson says, 'People were not generally required to explain their beliefs; but they were expected to accept the definitions provided for them by the Church!'. (94)

In 1384 John Wyclif had died leaving behind him a number of highly controversial pamphlets and a body of disciples prepared to face danger and death in the propagation of their faith. These disciples, who came to be known as 'Lollards', were a mixed group containing some discontented clergy as well as a number of educated laymen. However, they were united in their desire for reform in the Church and in their belief in Wyclif as a prophet. Unfortunately, their practical demands for reform were often mixed with much criticism of the clergy, both secular and regular. A demand that they should be silenced led in 1401 to the savage statute De heretico comburendo. This enacted that those who refused to abjure their heretical opinions should be tried by their bishop and, if found guilty, be handed over by him to the civil authorities to be publicly burnt.

In 1457 proceedings were taken against the brothers William and Richard Sparke of Somersham (Hunts.) who were Lollards. Among the more bizarre beliefs which they held were: A child whose parents have been baptized has no need of baptism and ought not to be baptized, since its parents' baptism is sufficient for it. Confession made to a believer

of the Lollard sect is more soul-healing than confession made to a priest. One of their tenets has a modern ring to it: the sole requisite for a valid marriage is mutual consent between the man and the woman and no other solemnity is needed to justify their living together as man and wife. The marriage service was brought in solely to provide fees for priests. These are just a few of the beliefs of these two brothers, but typical of Lollard adherents as a whole.<sup>(95)</sup>

In his recantation Richard Sparke affirmed that he had attended conventicles and listened to heretical teaching and that he was sworn to secrecy. William made a similar recantation. On their recantation, the bishop, John Chedworth, removed the sentence of excommunication pronounced against them. The rural deans of Huntingdon and of St. Ives, the vicar of Somersham or his deputy and the parochial chaplain of Ramsey were informed of the court's decision. The following penances were imposed: William and Richard Sparke, clad only in their breeches and shirts and carrying a faggot on their necks and shoulders, were to carry a penny wax candle (lighted) in their right hands. They were required to walk, on the usual market-day when it was at its busiest, round the public market-place of the town of Huntingdon. They were to do the same in the market-place of St. Ives. Once, on a Sunday or holy-day (when the procession takes place and there is therefore a great attendance of people), in the same way, walk round the churchyard of Somersham: and once in the same way round the churchyard of Ramsey. When the penance had been completed, they were to offer, on bended knee, what remained of the wax candles as an offering to the altar of that church where the penance was concluded. The above-named clergy were to be there,

duly robed in surplice and stole, and having a rod in their hands, on the days appointed. As the two brothers walked about the market-place and churchyard they were to be beaten with the rods by the said clergy at each corner of the market-place and churchyard, proclaiming publicly in the vulgar tongue, the cause of this penance. The clergy thereafter are to certify carefully in writing and under seal, what each of them did in this matter on each day of the penance and how the two Lollards bore themselves in doing it. This mandate was issued, under the bishop's seal ad causas, at Buckden manor, in Huntingdonshire, 27 May, 1457.<sup>(96)</sup>

On 22 June, 1457, Thomas Hulle of Hertford, a layman like the Sparke brothers, confessed before Bishop John Chedworth that he had used necromancy and heresy in helping Thomas Curteys. Like the brothers he was illiterate, and took an oath on the gospels that he would no longer resort to necromancy and heresies ( unspecified), and being unable to write his name, made his mark with a cross. His abjuration was made in All Saints church, Hertford.<sup>(97)</sup>

On the whole, apart from these isolated incidents, the archdeaconry appears to have been free from heresy. The main Lollard centres were the small towns and villages of the Chilterns, some parishes in the City of London, and parts of northern Essex. There were concentrations of heretics in Bristol and Coventry, and in the cloth townships of the Kentish weald. There were scatterings of Lollards elsewhere - in the cloth-making villages of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Berkshire, and in the Stour valley in Suffolk. There appear to have been very few in the west, The Midlands

or the north of England. (98)

### **Churchwardens and Lay Representatives**

The role of the laity in the life and work of the Church was seen through clerical eyes, since, until the emergence of churchwardens' accounts, all ecclesiastical records were compiled by the clergy. Unfortunately, there is little detailed knowledge of the work of the laity in the Church before the late fifteenth century. Emma Mason makes the harsh judgement, that 'the ideal parishioner was a dutifully programmed automaton with a limitless purse'. (99)

Wealthy lay patrons had certain rights and influence over their churches; but apart from the wealthy, lay society was excluded from the sphere of church government. In the English parish of the early thirteenth century there is no trace of the churchwardens, the common parish fund or the communal action by the parishioners which are found in and after the fourteenth century. (100)

One of the earliest references to churchwardens in the archdeaconry is to be found in the court rolls of the Ramsey manor of St. Ives where the custodes of the church of Woodhurst (Woldhyrst) used to receive the sum of two shillings and six pence from one John Aylmar on behalf of Nicholas Tannar. The date given is the 28th. year of Edward I, that is, 1299-1300. (101) Charles Drew has shown that church-

wardens came to be designated by a number of names :

procuratores parochie or ecclesie, custodes instauri or bonorum ecclesie, custodes operis or custodes fabrice ecclesie. (102)

Further names have been provided by Dorothy Owen: proctors, kirkmasters, church reeves, fabric masters, and keepers or wardens of fabric. Soon to be indistinguishable



from the churchwardens of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they were to act as trustees of properties and land given to provide income for the fabric.<sup>(103)</sup>

The earliest churchwardens' accounts are those of St. Michael, Bath, which extend from 1349 to 1575.<sup>(104)</sup> No such early accounts exist for the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. However, it is known from other sources what was expected of wardens. They were, in the first place, the representatives through whom the parishioners fulfilled certain corporate responsibilities. The responsibilities of the laity reached their classical definition in the constitutions attributed by Lyndwood to Archbishop Robert Winchelsea (1294-1313) in 1305.<sup>(105)</sup> The constitutions laid down that the parishioners should be responsible for the provision of the books needed for worship: legendam, antiphonare, gradale, psalterium, troparium, ordinale, missale and a chalice. The vestments too were to be their concern. A font with a lock had also to be provided. They were also responsible for the enclosure of the cemetery or churchyard and to both the interior and exterior of the nave.<sup>(106)</sup>

In the visitation of the churches belonging to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's cathedral in 1458 the dean and M. Richard Ewen met some layfolk, who, although not described as churchwardens, were gardiani, representatives of the people. In their visitation of Aldbury the names of Thomas Grene, Thomas Ponde, John Ayworth, Thomas Whylyscard, John Godwyn, Henry Grene have the words gardiani and inquisitores alongside them. It is possible that two of them were churchwardens. They reported that the chancel and the nave were in bono statu.<sup>(107)</sup> These men were no automata, and were certainly concerned about the state of their church.

No names are given at the visitation of the churches at Ardleigh, Kemsworth and Sandon. However, it appears that the laity had been carrying out their duties of caring for the fabric faithfully, as the naves of the above churches are variously described as being in bono statu, and at Sandon as bene cooperta cum plumbo. (108)

The fabric of a number of Huntingdonshire churches benefited from the fines levied in the fifteenth century for breaking the by-laws. W.O.Ault has pointed out that sharing fines with the parish church in the early years of the fifteenth century, reached its fullest extent in the second and third quarters of the century and was then for the most part discontinued. (109)

Fines levied at the manorial court of Wistow between 1407 and 1473 totalled twenty-eight, of these seventeen were shared with the church. Houghton had a substantial number of autumn by-laws in its court roll. These were violated on twenty-two occasions and fines were levied between 1401 and 1456 of which eight were shared with the Witton, a hamlet of Houghton. Thereafter, no by-laws were recorded in the Houghton rolls. (110)

While it is not certain to what uses the church put the shared fines, occasionally the words 'to the fabric of the church' appears. At Chelmsford, Essex, in 1475, the share of the fine was to go to 'the wardens of the church for the time being for the benefit of the church'. (111)

Expensive work was carried out on the walls of the nave of Warboys church which were raised in the fifteenth century to accommodate a clerestory. A finely-carved roof completed the work. Ault makes the point that many who

were fined for breach of the agrarian by-laws could have unwittingly contributed to this work. No churchwardens' accounts for this period are available, so the theory cannot be proved. (112)

Occasionally, churchwardens had to take drastic action on behalf of others. In 1400, the two churchwardens and twenty-one parishioners from Great Gaddesden had a dispute with the patrons, the priory of King's Langley, who had appropriated the church. They complained that the priory had cancelled the customary payment of ten shillings a year to the poor of the parish. The priory agreed that in return for a release from all arrears it would pay ten shillings to the churchwardens annually on the feast of the Annunciation or within eight days thereafter 'to be distributed to the poor of the said vill'. If unpaid, then, 'the churchwardens have leave to distrain, seize, carry off and keep the produce and cattle belonging to the said rectory in the fields and pastures to the value of ten shillings'. (113)

Although the office of churchwarden was free from every kind of civil function, it included the duty of presentment to the ecclesiastical court of moral delinquencies in either the clergy or the laity of the parish. Wardens were also responsible for the good state of the church and its furnishings. Where there was an absentee rector the task of the churchwardens seems to have been made harder. The visitation records of Bishop Atwater's commissaries in 1518 show that where an incumbent was absent, the church frequently fell into decay. At Ellington (Luigton) in the deanery of Leightonstone, it was reported that the rector was non-resident and the roof and windows of the chancel were in a sorry state. The cemetery

was not properly enclosed because of the rector's negligence or carelessness.<sup>(114)</sup> The non-resident vicar of Alconbury<sup>(115)</sup> has already been considered, but the wardens also reported that Henry Man and the wife of Christopher Walton were suspected of carrying on an adulterous relationship. Leonard Robson owed the church 2ls. 6d. and refused to pay(et refutata ea soluere).<sup>(116)</sup> Repairs to the nave needed to be carried out at Coppingford and Swineshead and the cemetery at Upton needed to be enclosed. At Winwick Alice Danyell, the wife of Robert Danyell of Stukeley, owed the church 'iii quarteria ordeï ex legato mariti sui Roberti Thomson'.<sup>(117)</sup>

At Stibbington the wardens had difficulties with Thomas Raynford, a carpenter, who had made a bargain to carry out repairs to the church, but had failed to do so, even though he had been paid for the work.<sup>(118)</sup> At St. Ives initiative had been shown by the parishioners who were having their badly-built belfry rebuilt; otherwise all was well.<sup>(119)</sup> However, all was not well at Little Stukeley as the church had many debtors in diuersis summis pecuniarum. Representatives of the parish, described here as gardiani, were urged to collect the debts owed by next Michaelmas.<sup>(120)</sup>

On 21 April 1518 Bishop Atwater held his visitation at Berkhamstead for the deanery, but no report from St. Peter's church, Great Berkhamstead is recorded. The story was similar to that of other deaneries: some churches had been neglected, while others reported omnia bene. The nave roof of Northchurch (Berkhamstead, St. Mary) needed repairs which the parishioners promised to carry out during the year.<sup>(121)</sup> The patrons of Hemel Hempstead church, described as proprietors in the bishop's visitation returns, the master and

fellows of Ashridge, while generous to the poor, were unable to help in repairs to the chancel, which the vicar had begun to repair. Similarly, the prior and convent of King's Langley, had made no effort to repair the chancel of the church which is described as defectiuus in le pavyng et in le roffe. (122)

At the visitation of Baldock deanery on 6 May, 1518 the parishioners of Cottered and Rushden reported that all was well. Other entries merely use the words omnia bene. In other churches all was not well, as has been shown in an earlier chapter. (123)

The visitation held at Hitchin on 16 May, 1518 provides a lively picture of life in some parish churches. It is not clear whether the wardens are reporting conditions or if the incumbent is reporting. Graveley with Chivesfield lacked an altar cloth and an alb. The cemetery had no gates. The font was not properly covered, and the church was not in a good state of repair. Apart from these faults, Richard Jurden, William Vyall were debtors to the church and refused to pay. The parishioners were talkative and chatted to one another at the time of divine service. At Kimpton the church had problems in keeping the children quiet during the service, as infantes plerumque rident flent et clamant in ecclesia temporibus diuinorum. (124)

In one church in the St. Neots deanery, namely Offord Darcy, the words parrochiani dicunt omnia prospera are used. Evidently, they were pleased with all that was being done in the parish, or, of course, they could have been complacent. Great Gransden had a somewhat negative compliment in the words Nil mali ibidem reperitur (125)

At Toseland, a chapel to Great Paxton, the parishioners had several grievances: they had no chaplain, because of the negligence of the vicar of Paxton. The chancel had no roof tiles and the bell was broken. The dean and chapter of Lincoln were the patrons and the vicar and parishioners agreed to act as arbiters between John Grene, one of the bishop's commissaries and the cathedral chancellor.<sup>(126)</sup> At Godmanchester five acres of land had been given ab antiquo legate for the provision of a lamp which should burn by day and night before the statue of beata Maria in the parish church. However, because of John Wynde's negligence this was no longer observed. The incumbent at this time was Christopher Plummer, so John Wynde must have been an assistant.<sup>(127)</sup>

The term gardiani is used more frequently in Longland's visitation of 1530, especially in churches where all is said to be well. In the Berkhamstead deanery the wardens of Shenley, Puttenham and Wheathampstead were satisfied. Wardens are also mentioned as being content in the parishes of Digs-well, Sacombe and Hertford St. Nicholas in the Hertford deanery. Whether the term gardiani meant churchwardens or just a group of faithful parishioners is not clear. The term omnia bene was used for Little Wymondley, Ickleford and Gravely in the Hitchin deanery. There are numerous other references to parishes where all was well, but no direct references to the churchwardens. Strangely, no reference whatsoever was made in any of the Huntingdonshire deaneries to churchwardens or gardiani, although many churches have omnia bene alongside them.<sup>(128)</sup> A.H. Thompson has pointed out that Bishop Longland's deputies did their work in a much more summary way than Atwater's. With these subordinates visitation had become

in fact , a piece of formal procedure to be gone through at intervals without too much attention to detail. So too much must not be made of their omissions. (129)

The visitation returns discussed above show a real concern on the part of the laity, represented by the churchwardens, for the upkeep of their services. It was reported in Atwater's visitation of Orton Longueville that the rector had refused to minister the sacrament of the Eucharist to the wives of Henry Herrings and Christopher Huetson. (130) The parishioners who lived near Puttocks Hardwick in the parish of Eynesbury felt they had a grievance as their chaplain, Hugh Garnet, had neglected his duty of celebrating mass there as he ought, according to the foundation. At the court of audience which followed the visitation M. Hugh Garnet, who had been cited to appear, said that he wished to implement the foundation of the chapel of St. Thomas (the Martyr) of Hardwick. He was required to show the foundation deed, if it could be found, before the feast of St. Thomas the Martyr ( 29 December). (131)

Bishop's visitations were held normally once in three years and archdeacon's visitation occurred twice yearly. The office of churchwarden prior to the Reformation was essentially and solely ecclesiastical. The churchwardens were often unlettered men, but their duties were not simple. As J.C. Cox says, 'The fiscal machinery necessary to maintain a costly form of public worship in an efficient state, in days when no one even dreamt of compulsory Church rates, was varied and complicated, and must have required constant attention and no small share of business capacity, notwithstanding the usual generosity of parishioners of all conditions'. (132)

Unfortunately, there are few pre-Reformation churchwardens' accounts available for the Huntingdon archdeaconry. Those of Baldock show what expenses were incurred in the parish during the years 1540, 1544 and 1548. The remainder are post-Reformation and outside our period. Master Vent and Master Polles had left xxiiis iiiid and xlviis viiid for their obits (abbotts). The wardens also 'payde for Hewe Salmans dirige (derge) and beadroll (bedrole) for v yere' the sum of iiis iiiid. During that year repairs to the church had been carried out, as Robart Carpyndore was to receive vs for 'to yere for is fe', and the glazier (glassyer) the sum of xiiis iiiid for mendyng of the chyrche wendows'. The clock maker was to receive xxxs and 'Roger Smythe of Weston for mendyng the grete bell clapere viiis iid.' The sum of xiiiiis was paid to the 'Brothered' for three pieces of timber. Presumably, this was for a house belonging to the Brotherhood of the Name of Jesus. (133)

In a later account for 1540 the churchwardens received vis viiid for the obit of Master Perese Poule. As we have seen, it was a common practice for testators to leave money in their wills for obits, until the practice was discouraged in 1548. (134) The Baldock accounts for 1544 give the names of the wardens: William Fletcher and John Wilson. Various sums are spent on church repairs: the plumber received iiiis vid for ix lbs soder (solder) and for work; James Sansam received xxd for mending the church stove, and the scouring of a censer cost iid. This item was soon to disappear from the records with the changes in Edward VI's reign. Sums of money were spent in all the Baldock accounts on bellropes. In the 1544 account Hary Beryg was paid xvd for bellropes, xvid. 'for the grett belle rope' and vid. for holly and mend-



yng of the belle baudrykes.<sup>(136)</sup> The bells receive much attention ,as in the same account James Hynd received viiis for 'mending of ii bell clapers'. While on Corpus Christi day the ringers received iiid. Beryge must have been the church's odd job man, as a later entry in the same account for 1544 records that he received iid. 'for ii lynes for the roode and for the .yle', viiid. for a bell rope and a 'payer of yekes'(tags to a bell rope), and for the mending of the cloke and soderyng the porch xiid.' New surplices were made during the year and Tekylles wife received iis xd for cloth for three surplices and xxd for making them. Ropes for the organ bellows cost iis viiid.<sup>(137)</sup> The two church wardens seem to have carried out their duties of caring for the fabric conscientiously.

The churchwardens' accounts for St.John Baptist,Huntingdon for 1547 provide details of the cost of building a steeple for the church. John Cunliff and Richard Craton were churchwardens when the work was begun. It appears that some workmen were paid in advance: the record reads- Item'paid to William Bake(r) and his fellows in earnest of ye bargain for ye stepull ..... 6s 8d and 3s. The sums of money paid to various workmen who dug the foundations varied considerably: the skilled free mason Thomas Reper for 'hys footmaking in ye foundation, ditching' was paid £3 6s 8d.W. Hall for digging the foundation received 20d. Richard Swanson received the same; but John Towe, Thomas Huffe ,John Edward and J. Bayle each received 4d. Receipts of Richard Bramton and John English, churchwardens of Holywell later in the same year,amounted to £9 3s 4d.<sup>(138)</sup>  
<sup>(139)</sup>  
The most generous donation was £6 , paid by a William Newman.

Simple and unlettered these wardens may have been, but on the evidence available , they appear to have an eye for detail and a real concern for the fabric of their church. Wardens in general would have much more to do in the years ahead when the full impact of the Reformation came upon them. From 1549 onwards these church officials were turned into relieving officers to deal with the mass of poverty created in the main by the suppression of the monasteries and through the seizure by the Crown of chantries and obits.

### Notes on Section 3 The Church and The Laity

- 1 W.G.Hoskins, The Making of The English Landscape (London, 1977)106-7; Minsters and Parish Churches, The Local Church in Transition 950-1200, ed. J.Blair(O.U.C.A., 1988), 5, Ashwell, Hitchin, Hertingfordbury, Welwyn and Wesfon are identified as former Saxon minsters.
- 2 There are scratch dials in the following churches:  
Huntingdonshire: Barham, Buckworth, Bythorn, Elton, Fenstanton, Gt.Gidding, Grafham, Hail Weston, Hamerton, Hemingford Abbots, Keyston, Orton Waterville, Pidley-cum-Fenton, Southoe, Spaldwick, Stanground, Stow Longa, Old Weston, Tilbrook, Yelling.  
  
Hertfordshire: Bengoe, Furneaux Pelham, Gt.Wymondley, Long Marston, North Mimms, Redbourn, Ridge, Sandridge, Standon, Tewin.
- 3 See appendix for illustration.
- 4 D.M.Owen, Church and Society In Medieval Lincolnshire (Lincoln, 1981), 102-3; Daniel Rock, The Church of Our Fathers, ed. G.W.Hart and W.H.Frere(London, 1905), i.110-111.
- 5 Visitations in The Diocese of Lincoln 1517-1531, ed.A. Hamilton Thompson(3 vols., L.R.S. 33, 35, 37, 1940, 1944, 1947), I, Intro.li, 6. Hartford is on the Great Ouse, between St.Ives and Huntingdon.
- 6 Grosseteste, 258-259.
- 7 Ibid. 260-261, 265-266.
- 8 English Historical Documents III, 1189-1327 , ed.H. Rothwell(London, 1975), Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, canon 21, 654-5.
- 9 The Jewel of The Church, Gerald of Wales , transl. and ed. J.J.Hagen (Leiden, 1979), Dist.1, ch.8. 21; T.E. Bridgett, A History of The Holy Eucharist in Great Britain (London, 1881), ii, 55.
- 10 F.A.Gasquet, Parish Life In Medieval England(London, 1906), 180.
- 11 W.Maskell, Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicana (3 vols. London, 1846), i, ccv.

- 12 Maskell, Mon.Rit.i,29.
- 13 H.B.Swete,Church Services and Service Books Before The Reformation (London,1914), 139-140.
- 14 J.R.H.Moorman, A History of The Church In England (London,1954), 124.
- 15 Anglia Sacra, ed. H.Wharton (2 vols.,1691),ii.347ff.  
Robert Grosseteste,Scholar and Bishop,ed.D.A.Callus,151
- 16 Handlyng Synne of Robert of Brunne, ed.F.J.Furnival (E.E.T.S.Orig. Ser. 119,1902),11547.
- 17 G.R.Owst,Literature and Pulpit In Medieval England ( Cambridge, 1933),237.
- 18 The Lay Folks' Catechism, ed.T.F.Simmons and H.E. Nolloth(E.E.T.S. Orig.Ser.118, 1901),11. 77-161.
- 19 The Prick of Conscience, ed. Richard Morris (The Philological Society,1863),11. 3762ff.  
The doctrine of treasury of merits was sketched by Alexander of Hales (d.1245) and expounded by Thomas Aquinas(d.1274). Pope Clement VI in 1343 and 1350 affirmed the doctrine of the treasury. It is a treasure which is distrubuted by blessed Peter and his successors. Indulgences or remissions of penalties due for confessed sins were granted from this store of merit,not,as Aquinas observed,annulling the penalty, but providing to the sinners the means of paying it.  
John T.McNeil,A History of The Cure of Souls(New York and London,1977),ch.vii,149.
- 20 Swete, Church Services , 158-160: Mon.Rit i,66f.
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- 40 Ibid. 100-101, no. 212, 2AR 59<sup>v</sup>.-74<sup>r</sup>.
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- 79 Repingdon, II, 308.
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Exchequer Miscellaneous file 12, no.4. Unfortunately,  
no dates have been provided to enable identification  
of the parson or the bishop.
- 82 Hunt. Wills, i,23.
- 83 Ibid. ii,31.
- 84 Sutton, III, Intro. xxxix.
- 85 Ibid. IV,183.
- 86 Ibid. V,91.
- 87 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. III, fo. 49<sup>v</sup>.
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- 90 Documents Relating to Cambridgeshire Villages, Nos.V  
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eds. W.M.Palmer and H.W.Saunders (Cambridge,1926),77.
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(Oxford,1989), 153-155; J.C.Cox,Sanctuary and  
Sanctuary Seekers (London,1911), 23ff.
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XX, fo. 12<sup>v</sup>.
- 96 Ibid. 102-103.
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- 100 C.R. Cheney, From Becket To Langton (Manchester, 1965), 160.
- 101 P.R.O., SC2, Port 179, no. 10, m. 6d.
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- 106 Visitations of Churches Belonging to St. Paul's Cathedral in 1297 and 1458, ed. W. Sparrow Simpson, (Camden Soc. New Ser. 55, 1895), Intro. xxiv.
- 107 Ibid. 106-107.
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- 109 W.O. Ault, 'Manor Court and Parish Church In Fifteenth Century England: A Study of Village By-Laws', Speculum, 42 (1967), 53.
- 110 Ibid. 54, citing B.M. Add Chs. 39770, 39866, 39830, 39870; P.R.O.S.C.2/179/59, m. 7d., S.C.2/179/67, m. 5d., S.C.2/179/55m.2 and m. 2d.
- 111 Ibid. 61., referring to Weston (Hunts.), P.R.O.S.C.2/179/52.m.1d.



- 112 W.O.Ault, 'Manor Court', 62., V.C.H. Hunts., II, 346.
- 113 '...tunc bene licebit dictis custodibus de fructis et cattallis in agris seu pascuis ad rectoriam ipsius ecclesie pertinentibus distringere capere effugare et custodire ad valorem decem solidorum'. B.L.Add.Ch.27399.
- 114 Visitations In The Diocese of Lincoln 1517-1531, ed.A. H.Thompson ( 3 vols. L.R.S. 33,35,37, 1940,1944,1947), I, 1.
- 115 The vicar of Alconbury, when he was present, was criticised for being so slow in administering the sacrament of Holy Communion. Visitations I, 2.
- 116 It was the duty of the churchwardens to report on all misbehaviour and to denounce fornicators etc. and it was not the task of the priests, who themselves were occasionally cited, as may be seen in the Visitation records. Visitations, I, 1-2.
- 117 Ibid. I ,2,3.
- 118 Ibid. I, 4.
- 119 Ibid. I,5.
- 120 Ibid. I,6.
- 121 Ibid. I,101.
- 122 Ibid. I,101,102.
- 123 Ibid. I,109-111.
- 124 Ibid. 112.
- 125 Ibid.I,117.
- 126 Ibid.I,118.
- 127 Ibid.
- 128 Ibid. II,15-18.
- 129 Ibid. I, Intro. ciii-civ.
- 130 Ibid. I,3.
- 131 An Episcopal Court Book, ed.M.Bowker, ( L.R.S. 61,1967), 97-98.
- 132 C.Cox, Churchwardens' Accounts, 2.

- 133 Tudor Churchwardens' Accounts, ed. Anthony Palmer,  
(Hertfordshire R.S.I,1985), 55 and n.65. The brother-  
hood of the Name of Jesus was founded in 1459 and was  
very wealthy. (V.C.H.,Herts III,67).
- 134 Ibid. 61.
- 135 Ibid. 62.
- 136 Ibid. 63. 'Baudrykes'. Baldric: the leather gear  
by which the clapper was suspended.
- 137 Ibid. 62-63.
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- 139 Ibid. fo.2.

## Sixteenth Century Reforms

Historians are divided in their approach to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. There are those who argue that the Reformation was inevitable because of the general discontent with the Church and especially with the clergy. Lollardy prepared the way. The Lollards certainly show there was discontent with the state of the Church, and some were organised into secret sects. However, these were in the minority, and not very prominent in the Huntingdon archdeaconry, although they appeared elsewhere in the diocese.

The revisionist approach to the Reformation is different, and those who take this approach see the Reformation as only in a limited sense popular. The catholic majority were not hostile to the Church, and the Reformation was not the product of a long-term clash between the laity and the clergy. Probably the truth lies midway between these two positions. Yet every historian seems to agree that the Church had its faults and that there was need for reform. Pluralism and absenteeism had been in existence for far too long. Many of the clergy were ill-educated, and some undoubtedly were lax.

In his sermon to ordinands in York c.1510, the Chancellor of York Minster, William Melton, referred to the 'crop of oafish and boorish priests, some of whom are engaged on ignoble and servile tasks, while others abandon themselves to tavern-haunting, swilling and drunkenness'.<sup>(1)</sup> There is much more in the same vein to encourage the young ordinands to follow the path of goodness. Melton was a humanist reformer, and like his friend, Dean Colet, felt deeply the need to raise the intellectual and moral standards of the clergy.

The actual has fallen below the ideal throughout the ages, and the sixteenth century is no different from previous or subsequent centuries in this respect.

The picture of the sixteenth -century clergy which emerges from the diocesan material is complex, and some archdeaconries appear to be better served than others. For example, in the visitation returns for 1507 only one case of incontinence was reported out of 88 parishes visited in the Huntingdon archdeaconry. This figure compares very favourably with the visitation figures for the Leicester archdeaconry carried out in 1509 when three cases of incontinence were discovered from 941 <sup>(2)</sup> visits to some 217 parishes. It would appear that on the whole the clergy were well-behaved for the early part of the century.

In the later returns for 1518 the record is good. Bishop Atwater or his commissary visited 118 parishes within the archdeaconry and only two cases of suspected incontinence were reported. The rector of Aston had Joan Morgan and Edith Butler in his house. <sup>(3)</sup> They were probably servants. Robert Lacy, curate of Aldenham, also had two women in his house. Evidently, he had a sense of guilt, as it was reported that he had left the country (ipse aufugit patriam) at the time of visitation; he was accordingly suspended from celebrating divine service. <sup>(4)</sup> There was certainly no evidence of wholesale misbehaviour on the part of the clergy in the archdeaconry.

However, although the record for propriety was good, a number of clergy were reported as being non-resident. Where a parish was well-served by a conscientious deputy, all was well; but the visitation returns show that all was

not always well. In the case of Robert Lacy, cited above, the vicar of Aldenham was M. Robert Marshall who was non-resident. In fact he was provost of the college of Hemingborough, Yorkshire. His curate, as has been shown, was held in suspicion. As a result, the patrons, the abbot and convent of Westminster, were required at the bishop's court to send a representative to appear before the bishop at Liddington on 6 October, 1518.<sup>(5)</sup>

As was seen in an earlier chapter, parishes which had non-resident incumbents appear to have been neglected. Ashwell, which was appropriated to Westminster Abbey, had a vicar who was non-resident, despite the oath de continuo residendo et personaliter ministrando sworn at his institution. Both the chancel and the vicarage were reported as being dilapidated in 1518. The curate, Thomas Bagthwaite, left in charge of the parish, was himself the incumbent of two vicarages, one in Mitcham in Surrey and the other in Canewdon in Essex. He wisely left the area.<sup>(6)</sup>

The absentee vicar of Ashwell was Richard Powell. He was still the vicar of the parish in 1530 when Bishop Longland's vicar general carried out his visitation. The church was still being neglected, as the chancel roof was in such a bad state of repair that the rain came through the roof on to the high altar. In addition he had not preached for ten years!<sup>(7)</sup> This visitation also showed that eighteen clergy were non-resident.<sup>(8)</sup> Evidently, the abbot and convent were not conscientious patrons, as two of their churches were badly neglected even after the admonition made in 1518. Aldenham has the entry: cancellus est multum ruinosus. Vicarius non residet set fuit absens per decem

annos. (9)

Among the acts passed by the reformation parliament was one limiting pluralism and non-residence.<sup>(10)</sup> There is no doubt that some clergy neglected their cures, largely because there were elsewhere, in some cases on behalf of the crown. Benefices were needed to provide these clerks with a suitable salary. When those who served the cures on their behalf were conscientious, all was well; but when those who were relied upon to perform their pastoral duties were also absent, then disaster could follow. However, on the whole, the vicars who served the cures appear not to have come in for any criticism in this archdeaconry.

Parliament passed a number of acts affecting the life and work of the Church as a whole. Among them was the act, passed in 1534, forbidding papal dispensations and the payment of Peter's pence.<sup>(11)</sup> This was followed by the Act of Supremacy which accepted the king's supremacy as a fact and gave him more positive powers to define doctrine and to discipline the 'spirituality' in any way he personally deemed necessary.<sup>(12)</sup> The first reference to Henry VIII's title of 'supreme head in earth of the Church of England' appearing in the Huntingdon institution registers was on the occasion when the king presented William Day to the church of Essendon on 21 February, 1536.<sup>(13)</sup> The title occurred in every other entry in the register when the king was presenting a clerk.

While the clergy had to come to terms with the above act, they also had to face greater restrictions. Again in 1534 the act annexing first fruits and tenths to the crown was passed: This was probably the harshest act of all

affecting the clergy. Not only were the entire 'first fruits, revenues and profits for one year' on new benefices now annexed to the Crown, but they became payable by all those entering any new living or ecclesiastical office, secular or monastic, from the highest to the lowest in the Church. In addition, under clause VIII, tenths became payable to the Crown annually.<sup>(14)</sup> These payments were to begin at Christmas 1535.

The act was preceded by a lengthy preamble, pointing out how grateful the King's 'loving and obedient subjects' should be for this opportunity to provide for the public wealth of their country, especially when it is borne in mind the many benefits the King has brought to them daily. A.G. Dickens comments, 'The Act for First Fruits and Tenths, judged at least by its intentions, looks the most heavy-handed of all Parliamentary measures imposed upon churchmen. If after perusing it they shared that overwhelming gratitude to the King expressed in its magniloquent preamble, they must have been singularly patriotic Englishmen'.<sup>(15)</sup>

This statute immediately involved one of Cromwell's most remarkable administrative exploits- the compilation of the Valor Ecclesiasticus, a detailed assessment of all clerical income from those of bishoprics down to those of vicarages and chapels.

The Valor shows that many of the wealthier livings were in the patronage of monasteries. Ramsey abbey held the patronage of Houghton, Holywell and Warboys, in the deanery of St. Ives, all of which were valued at £41 18s. 2d., £31 and £30 3s. 4d. respectively.<sup>(16)</sup> Wheathampstead, in the patronage of the bishop of Lincoln, was valued at £42 1s. 10d.<sup>(17)</sup>

These are just some of the details from the Valor, the rest are listed in the appendix.

After receiving a summary report of the visitors who provided the details for the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1536, Parliament passed the Act for the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries(27 Hen.VIII, c.28).<sup>(18)</sup> The Court of Augmentat-  
ion was set up to administer the ex-monastic properties. Their work was to continue with the fall of the greater houses. By persuasion, manipulation and the hard logic of changing times the great monasteries were brought to surrender one by one throughout 1538 and 1539, and these were accompanied by many of the lesser ones that had purchased a respite two years earlier.<sup>(19)</sup>

The religious orders, as been shown, were patrons of many churches in the diocese of Lincoln, a number of which were in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. With the dissolution of the monasteries came change, and much of the patronage passed into the King's hands. This was in many cases only temporary, as the King's commissioners were empowered to sell crown lands, whether monastic or not.

Thus, as a result of the sale of monastic lands, the new owners also held the advowsons of the churches on those lands, and so were able to present their own nominees to the bishop for institution. On 17 May, 1537, William Herdson was presented by William and Ambrose Baker and others to the church of Glatton, formerly in the patronage of Missenden abbey.<sup>(20)</sup> John Woodhall, gentleman, possessed the advowson of Folksworth church for one turn only, as it had passed to him from the abbot and convent of Crowland for the presentation of William Walwyn on 4 May, 1538.<sup>(21)</sup> The next



presentation to Folksworth was made by Miles Forest ,Esquire or gentleman of Morborn. He also held the advowson of Morborn, formerly in the patronage of the abbot and convent of Crowland.<sup>(22)</sup> Others are described as presenting to livings by reason of a grant from a dissolved or suppressed convent.<sup>(23)</sup>

Some of the earlier beneficiaries were local landowners, such as Miles Forest, cited above. Others were individual courtiers in high favour or were government agents whose support was needed ,such as Charles Brandon,Thomas Howard, Edward Seymour,William Wriothesley and John Russell. The latter presented Christopher Malham to the church of Stibbington on 8 November, 1537. The church had formerly been in the patronage of the monastery of Thorney.<sup>(24)</sup> John Russell was Keeper of the Great Seal at that time.

Henry VIII held on to a number of advowsons obtained from the dissolution of the monasteries In 1539 and 1546 he presented candidates to Great Stukeley, which had formerly been in the patronage of the prior and convent of Huntingdon.<sup>(25)</sup> He also made presentations to Aldenham, previously a living in the patronage of the abbey of Westminster, in 1542 and in 1544.<sup>(26)</sup> Between 1545 and 1546 he made presentations to Stanground, Yelling, St.John Baptist, Huntingdon, Hamerton, Bottlebridge, Winwick and again to Stanground.<sup>(27)</sup> All of these churches originally had a monastery as patron.

Whereas in the past ordinands were able to receive a title from a local religious community, they would in future have to seek the support of the local squire. This may be one of the causes for the decline in the number of those offering themselves for ordination between 1534 and the end of Henry VIII's reign. In the past the religious houses

provided titles for many ,especially local ordinands. With the dissolution ,of course, all that sponsorship came to an end. Mrs. Bowker has pointed out that a sharp decline in those offering themselves for ordination was evident in Lincoln diocese from 1536. After that date there were never more than thirty men coming forward for ordination.<sup>(28)</sup>

This is partly accounted for from 1541 when the diocese of Peterborough was carved out of the diocese of Lincoln and in 1542 the new diocese of Oxford was created. As a result the counties of Northampton and Rutland and Oxford were lost to the old diocese of Lincoln.

With the decline in the numbers of ordinands came more opportunities for the unbeneficed. The competition for livings was reduced. However, with the dissolution of the monasteries a great number of ordained men were released into the competitive market for benefices. A number received pensions. Others received ' capacities' releasing them from their vows as regular clergy or allowing them to hold benefices while remaining within their Order. Capacities issued by the Faculty Office at the suppression of a monastery or a friary were uniform; each monk or friar wanted both a release from vows and , if he were ordained, entitlement to a benefice.<sup>(29)</sup> Prior to the suppression of the monasteries, a fee of £12 would have been paid, although it seems in practice to have been reduced, often to £8. No fee was charged for members of a suppressed monastery.

What happened to many of the dispossessed monks and friars is not known. Some swelled the ranks of the unbeneficed. Others, like John Fyley( Filey ?) were more fortunate. He had been a monk of Revesby Abbey and in 1538 received a

(30)  
dispensation to hold a benefice with change of habit. He  
received the rectory of Flixborough from the king in the same  
year. The Valor shows that it was worth £13 10s.0d. (31) In  
1544 he was offered the valuable living of Holywell, worth  
£31, according to the 1535 valuation. (32) Fyley succeeded  
John Dromyn, chaplain to the duke of Suffolk, who had died. (33)

Others were not so fortunate as Fyley and remained as  
assistant clergy. John Smythe of Holme had been a monk at  
Thorney, as his last will and testament states. There is no  
reference to his being an incumbent, but evidently he had  
received a stipend, as he made a number of bequests to his  
family, to friends and to the poor. (34) Some monks, while  
attached to a parish, received a pension. John Nicolls, a  
former monk of Ramsey, for instance, received £8 while assist-  
ing at the church of Somersham. (35) A number of pensioners  
served as assistant curates. Dom. Gilbert Courtman, a former  
monk of Newnham, received a stipend of £5 6s. 8d. and a  
pension of £5 13s. 4d. while serving as a curate at Great  
Staughton. (36)

Several former monks were able to serve in parishes of  
which their priory had been patron. Michael Bonne and Roger  
Mayle, both monks of the Augustinian Priory of Huntingdon, on  
the dissolution, became assistants at All Saints Church,  
Huntingdon and St. Benedict, Huntingdon respectively. (37)  
Similarly, Robert Hatley and Robert Foster, both of whom had  
been monks of St. Neots Priory, in Bishop Longland's visitation  
of 1543 are shown as receiving pensions of £6 and £6 13s.4d.,  
while on the staff of St. Neots parish church, of which their  
convent had been patron. (38) Two former monks of Newnham  
Priory, Gilbert Courtman and John Smyth became assistants at

(39)  
Great Houghton and Knebworth respectively. John Forest,  
also a pensioner of Newnham, was more fortunate than his  
fellow monks, as he was instituted vicar of Sandon (Herts.)  
(40)  
on 27 June, 1543. In his visitation of the same year,  
John Forest is referred to as ibidem est pens(ionari)us de  
Newenham, receiving £6 6s. 8d. An X alongside this statement  
(41)  
may mean that the pension is no longer paid.

Hemel Hempstead benefited from the ministry of two former  
canons of Ashridge, Richard Cannan ( Cannon ?) and Richard  
Bedford and a third canon, also a pensioner of Ashridge,  
(42)  
Joseph Stepney served in the parish of Great Gaddesden.  
The house at Ashridge had been patrons of Hemel Hempstead  
church, so it was easy for former canons to serve the parish.  
Great Gaddesden had been in the gift of the prioress of  
Dartford on behalf of the frairs at King's Langley.

M. Richard Palmer, formerly prior of Spalding (Lincs),  
received a dispensation in 1540 to hold a benefice with change  
(43)  
of habit. However, in 1543 Longland's visitation shows  
that he was still unbeneficed and attached to the church of  
(44)  
Great Staughton. What happened to the rest of the monks  
of Spalding who also had dispensations to hold a benefice  
with change of habit is not known.

In any assessment of the impact of the Henrician reform-  
ation wills have played and are playing an important part.  
The evidence from wills registered in the Huntingdon archd-  
deaconry shows that both the clergy and the laity were  
committed to the old religion until a harsher regime in  
Edward VI's reign supplanted it.

Some testators appear to have underlined their beliefs  
with a conventional formula. For instance, Andrew Pollard,

late vicar of Stanground, who made a will on 1 August, 1545 made in the 'manner and form following, that I bequeath my soul to Almighty God through the merits of his un(covenanted) mercy and by the merits of his passion trusting to have remission of my sins thereby whereunto also I believe our blessed Lady and all the holy company of saints to help me by their prayers ...'. He goes on to give generously to his church, and £10 to Brother Leonard Pollard to 'sing for my soul by (the) space of two years'.<sup>(45)</sup>

In similar fashion, Richard Bromhall, vicar of St. Ives, in his will of 23 August, 1545, commends his soul 'to the mercy of Christ whom I (ac)knowlege steadfastly to be my redeemer and saviour by the merits of whose passion I conceive full hope and confidence to be of the number of his elect and chosen children without whom I confess (there) to be no salvation and the glorious Virgin, our Blessed Lady and to all the heavenly company'.<sup>(46)</sup> However, he makes no specific request for prayers or an obit.

The wills reflect the changing conditions of the period. On 11 July, 1536 convocation passed The Ten Articles. These were followed by royal injunctions in 1536 and 1538 where the use and abuse of images were questioned. While it was acknowledged that images had their uses, these had to be carefully safeguarded. Images had a threefold use: as representatives of virtue and good example, as kindlers or stirrers of men's minds and as stimuli to repentance. In no way were they to be censed or knelt to or were offerings to be made to them.<sup>(47)</sup>

In 1538 a second set of Injunctions were issued to the clergy. Item VI. of these injunctions enjoined the clergy

to exhort their parishioners to undertake 'works of charity, mercy, and faith, specially prescribed and commanded in Scripture and not to repose their trust or affiance in any other works devised by men's phantasies beside Scripture; as in wandering to pilgrimages, offering of money, candles or tapers to images or relics, or kissing or licking the same, saying over a number of beads.....' .(48) The only lights to be allowed were those above the rood loft, the light before the Sacrament of the altar, and the light about the sepulchre. (49)

The effect of these injunctions may be seen in the wills made after 1538. Thus, Roger Hadfield, formerly vicar of Rushden, who made his will on 28 October, 1546, made gifts to the church of Lincoln and the bells of Rushden, and 10d. to the sepulchre light there. There is possibly a veiled request for masses in the instruction to his executor 'to bestow for the most for my soul and all Christian souls after his discretion as my assured trust is in him'. (50)

An earlier will reveals the contrast. William Colman of Hemel Hempstead, in his will dated 21 May, 1535, left money to the mother church of Lincoln, the high altar of the church at Hemel Hempstead, and 16d. to the four principal lights in the aforesaid church, and 4d. to the torches. (51) An even greater contrast is shown in a clerical will of 1532, made by William Smythe, parson of Orton Waterville on 19 November. To each of the following lights he gave 12d.: the sepulchre, our Lady, All Hallows, a (blank), St. George, and to the rood light. Prayers for the repose of his soul were solicited from the Friars Minor at Stamford and the other three orders. (52)

Many other wills made at this time reflect the changes brought about by the fulfilment of the 1538 Injunctions. All wills made within the archdeaconry after 1538 make reference only to the rood light, torches (for funerals) or the sepulchre light, which were permitted. Thus, Thomas Lake of Wistow in his will of 20 April, 1543 gave 20d. to the rood light and 2s. to the torches.<sup>(53)</sup> Agnes Goodgame of Great Gransden gave 8s. 4d. to the sepulchre light in her will of 1545.<sup>(54)</sup>

In 1545 Parliament passed an act whereby chantries, the endowments of colleges, hospitals and brotherhoods etc. were vested in the hands of the King (37 Hen. VIII, c.4). Commissioners were appointed and instructions were given to them to inquire into the number and names of all the chantries, hospitals, free chapels, fraternities, brotherhoods, guilds and stipendiary priests. The Commissioners were to find out the yearly value of the lands and possessions belonging to them, together with the value of the ornaments, plate, goods and chattels. As a result of this act several chantries had been dissolved. The stated intention of the 1545 act had been to obtain money for the wars against France and Scotland. Although under the terms of the act, all 'fraternities, brotherhoods and guilds' were given to the King, general funds of secular guilds were not in fact taken.<sup>(55)</sup>

In January 1547 Henry VIII died, thus freeing the reforming party in the country from any restraints in their reforming zeal. Despite his cynicism and hatred of the papacy, Henry remained attached to much of the traditional framework of Catholicism. His death was marked by obsequies on a scale far greater than those accorded his two successors.<sup>(56)</sup> However, drastic changes were to take place.

The government of Protector Somerset issued Injunctions on 31 July, 1547 ordering the destruction of all shrines, paintings and pictures of saints and all images which had been offered to or had candles burned before them. Lights in church were limited to two upon the high altar. Processions in or around the church when Mass was celebrated were forbidden and instructions to purchase the Bible were repeated.<sup>(57)</sup>

The effects of the reforms may be seen in one of the very few remaining sets of churchwardens' accounts for the early part of Edward VI's reign, those of Baldock. The accounts for 1540 refer to the payment of 18s. for pieces of timber to the brotherhood( Brothered) house, 'xviid for xii lbs candelles and xviid for a dossyn of candyll , xiiid payd for scoweryng of the grette canstykes and the smale cansteke'.<sup>(58)</sup>

In 1544 the churchwardens were still paying for 'a dosyn of candylles xviid' and ' ii lynes for the roode iid'.<sup>(59)</sup> The account for 1548 reflects the changes brought about by Somerset. Henry Borage received 12d 'for makynge clean the church after whyet lymyng', James Dysley 4d for raising the altar stone and Dyffyn received 21d for 'wasshyng out the images for iii days and a halfe'. Henry Borage(Boreg) also received 12d 'for taking down the ymages...'.<sup>(60)</sup>

The only other record referring to the removal of items from a church may be found in the churchwardens' accounts for Ramsey where 12d was paid for 'hewynge away the carvyd work' on the rood loft in 1549.<sup>(61)</sup> Unfortunately, no other churchwardens' accounts exist in Hertfordshire or Huntingdonshire for the first half of the sixteenth century,



except for some Hertfordshire parishes in the diocese of London. The churchwardens' accounts for the Hertfordshire parish of Bishops Stortford reveal some of the changes that were taking place. In 1548 the churchwardens paid the sum of 3s 4d to Percy Clarke for 'transposing wons a gayne of the servys hought of Lattyne into Ynglys'.<sup>(62)</sup> They also paid 5s 6d for the 'wonne halff of a boke calleyd the Parafrasys of Erasmous'.<sup>(63)</sup> The Royal Injunctions had ordered churchwardens to place not only a Bible, but also a copy of the 'Paraphrasis of Erasmus' in English and that the clergy should possess these, study them and be examined in them by the bishops. How far this scholarly work was understood by those parishioners who could read, is open to conjecture.

In 1547 an Act dissolving the Chantries was passed. An earlier act of Henry VIII in 1545 had vested the chantries in his hands, and a number of dissolutions had taken place after a survey by commissioners. The stated intention of the 1545 Act had been to obtain money for wars against France and Scotland. In the 1547 Act specifically Protestant doctrinal reasons were given for the proposed dissolutions. While the emphasis was on the abolition of all usages regarded as 'superstitious', the government also had financial motives. Parishioners who were aware of these financial motives endeavoured to protect their chantry and guild goods. In Huntingdon two villages concealed their guild possessions until the final round-up of missing lands by informers more than a decade after Elizabeth's accession. In the village of Elton the guild lands had been conveyed to feoffees in

1541 to the use of the poor and the repair of roads, bridges and the church. The Crown discovered and sold them. The feoffees argued against the crown that the lands had not been given to superstitious uses and did not come within the compass of the Act of 1547. They won their case and Elton still possesses its 'town land', which yields an income for the upkeep of the church.<sup>(64)</sup> In St. Neots things went the other way: an informer reported concealment and the land of the former Jesus Fraternity was seized.<sup>(65)</sup>

Other parishes endeavoured to forestall the crown's attempts to seize their property. The bailiffs of the town of Godmanchester ordered that all the deeds belonging to two of their guilds should be burnt and their possessions concealed from the royal commissioners.<sup>(66)</sup> Despite these various attempts to save the trappings of Catholic worship and practice, they were all doomed to pass by late 1549. As Professor Scarisbrick says 'The Reformation brought out the best and the worst in people'.<sup>(67)</sup>

Notes on Section 4 Sixteenth Century Reforms

- 1 Sermo exhortationis cancelarii Eboracensis( W.de Worde, c.1510), sig. A iii, quoted in The Reformation in England to the Accession of Elizabeth I, Documents of Modern History, eds. A.G.Dickens and D.Carr (London,rep. 1989), 15.
- 2 L.A.O. vj 6, fos.1-15<sup>v</sup>.
- 3 Visitations in the Diocese of Lincoln 1517-1531,ed. A. Hamilton Thompson, (3 vols. L.R.S. 33,37, 1940,1944, 1947), I, 111.
- 4 Ibid. 102.
- 5 An Episcopal Court Book 1514-1520, ed. M.Bowker (L.R.S. 61, 1967), 95.
- 6 Visitations,I, xxxi.
- 7 Ibid. II, 18.
- 8 Ibid. II,14-24.
- 9 Ibid. II, 16.
- 10 21 Henry VIII, c. 13,quoted in Documents of Modern History, 19.
- 11 25 Henry VIII,c.21; Statutes of the Realm(11 vols.Rec. Comm., 1830 -52), iii. 464-71.
- 12 Stat. Realm,iii.492.
- 13 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII,fo.244<sup>v</sup>.
- 14 Stat. Realm, III. 575-8.
- 15 A.G.Dickens, The English Reformation ( 2nd. ed. London, 1989),144.
- 16 Valor Eccles. IV, 269-271.
- 17 Ibid. 276.
- 18 Stat. Realm , III, 575-8.
- 19 David Knowles, The Religious Orders In England (3 vols. Cambridge, pb. edn. 1979), III, The Tudor Age, 357.
- 20 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII, fo. 245<sup>r</sup>.

- 21 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII, fo. 245<sup>v</sup>.
- 22 Ibid. fo. 247<sup>r</sup>.
- 23 Ibid. fos. 247<sup>r</sup>. 247<sup>v</sup>., 248<sup>r</sup>., 249<sup>r</sup>- 253<sup>v</sup>.
- 24 Ibid. fo. 245<sup>v</sup>.
- 25 Ibid. fos. 246<sup>v</sup>., 253<sup>r</sup>.
- 26 Ibid. fos. 249<sup>v</sup>., 250<sup>r</sup>.
- 27 Ibid. fos. 252<sup>v</sup>.(bis); 253<sup>r</sup>.( four presentations); 253<sup>v</sup>., 254<sup>r</sup>.
- 28 M.Bowker, The Henrician Reformation and The Parish Clergy, (Cambridge,1981)127-8; The English Reformation Revised, ed. C.Haigh (Cambridge,1990), 78-79.
- 29 Faculty Office Registers 534-1549, ed. D.S.Chambers (Oxford,1966), Intro. xliv.
- 30 Ibid. 128, fo.187<sup>r</sup>.
- 31 L.A.O.Episc.Reg. XXVII, fo.250<sup>r</sup>.
- 32 Valor Eccles. IV,271.
- 33 L.A.O.Episc.Reg.XXVII, fo. 250<sup>r</sup>.
- 34 Wills, Hunt. VI, 153; Fac.Off.Reg. 205, fo.310<sup>v</sup>.
- 35 Fac.Off.Reg. 207, fo.313<sup>v</sup>.; L.A.O. vj/12.
- 36 L.A.O.vj/12, fo. 12<sup>v</sup>.; Visitations , 27 n.4.
- 37 Ibid. fo. 7<sup>r</sup>.; Fac.Off.Reg. 151.
- 38 Ibid. fo. 11<sup>r</sup>.
- 39 Ibid. fos.12<sup>v</sup>.;17<sup>v</sup>.; Visitations II, 27, n.4.
- 40 L.A.O.Reg. XXVII, fo. 250<sup>r</sup>.
- 41 L.A.O. vj/12,fo.14<sup>v</sup>.
- 42 Ibid. fo.19<sup>v</sup>.; Visitations II, 73; Fac.Off.Reg.,204. fo. 309.
- 43 Fac.Off.Reg., 207, fo. 313<sup>r</sup>.
- 44 L.A.O.vj/12 fo.12<sup>v</sup>.
- 45 Wills, Hunt. , VII, fo.196<sup>r</sup>.
- 46 Ibid. VII, fo.197<sup>r</sup>.

- 47 M.Aston, England's Iconoclasts (Oxford,1988),223,  
quoting from C.Lloyd, Formularies of Faith Put Forth  
by Authority During The Reign of Henry VIII (Oxford,  
1825), 4, 13-14.
- 48 Documents Illustrative of English Church History,eds.  
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- 49 Documents of the Christian Church, ed. H.Bettenson  
(Oxford,1946), 327.
- 50 Hunt.Wills.,VIII,fo.92<sup>r</sup>.
- 51 Ibid. V,fo.9<sup>r</sup>.
- 52 Ibid. IV,fo.100<sup>r</sup>.
- 53 Ibid. VII,fo.58<sup>r</sup>.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Documents of Modern History, 127.
- 56 R.Hutton,'The Local Impact of the Tudor Reformation',  
The English Reformation Revised, ed.C.Haigh (Cambridge,  
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- 57 Ibid.120.
- 58 Tudor Churchwardens Accounts, ed.A.Palmer (Herts.R.S.,  
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- 59 Ibid., 63.
- 60 Ibid.,66, accounts for 1548.
- 61 Hunt.R.O. MS 2449/25 (no pagination) Ramsey church-  
warden's accounts.
- 62 Early Churchwardens' Accounts of Bishops Stortford,  
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- 63 Ibid. n.4. The Royal Injunctions of 1547 ordered  
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F.Proctor and W.H.Frere, A New History of The Book of  
Common Prayer (London,1949),35.
- 64 V.C.H.Hunts., iii,13,166; C.P.R. 1569-73, 40-1.;J.J.  
Scarisbrick,The Reformation and the English People,  
(Oxford,1984),98.

- 65     V.C.H., Hunts.,ii,345.
- 66     A.Kreider, English Chantries: the road to dissolution,  
158; V.C.H. Hunts.,ii,295; J.J.Scarisbrick,The Reform-  
ation and the English People, 99.
- 67     J.J.Scarisbrick, as above, 107.

## Observations and Conclusions

This survey of a small part of the great diocese of Lincoln, namely the archdeaconry of Huntingdon, has examined the life and work of the parish clergy over four and a half centuries. Under the headings of patrons, clergy and people the strengths, shown in the deep devotion of the people and many of the clergy, and the weaknesses, shown in pluralism, absenteeism and laxity of some of the clergy, have been examined. Inevitably, given the general frailty of mankind, this has been a story of some successes and some failures.

The twelfth century saw the consolidation of the parish as the norm and the main unit of the Church's activity and mission. For the most part it was shown that the clergy were local men, largely unlearned, but nonetheless sincere. As the parish became to be regarded more as a benefice than as a cure of souls, so problems increased, leading to neglected churches. Fortunately, not all parishes suffered in this way.

Thirteenth-century bishops endeavoured to improve the conditions of the clergy, especially those who were vicars of appropriated churches. Monastic patrons especially were required to take more care of the churches in their possession. The reforming zeal of Innocent III and the Lateran Council of 1215 had a considerable influence on the Church, and bishops were moved to initiate reforms. A marked feature of this century is evident in the reforms attempted by Hugh of Wells, Robert Grosseteste, Richard Gravesend and Oliver Sutton. All were outstanding in their own way. Hugh of Wells made every effort to see that the parochial clergy were better educated. Grosseteste carried on Hugh's reforms,

and jealously guarded clerical privileges, so that both pope and king treated him with great respect. Gravesend and Sutton continued the good work.

At the end of the century Boniface VIII's constitution Cum ex eo was introduced to meet the needs of the parochial clergy. Earlier attempts had of course been made to provide educational opportunities for the clergy, but none was as successful as Boniface's constitution. While absenteeism from parishes had been a problem, because a number of the better educated clergy were used in both secular and clerical posts Cum ex eo acknowledged that owing to a lack of educational facilities the Church had to countenance some form of non-residence. Thus, while the constitution fulfilled one need it exacerbated another problem. Nevertheless, 'Boniface had proposed a solution to the problem of education of the parochial clergy which would not be improved upon in practice until the Council of Trent some two and a half centuries later'.<sup>(1)</sup>

The fourteenth century was a testing time for the clergy as they had to contend with the ravages of the Black Death and subsequent visitations of the pestilence. Some remained and died in their parishes, while others, comparatively few, fled to what they hoped were safer areas. One of the more striking trends of this century, which became an abuse, was the increase in the practice of exchanging benefices, often in rapid succession. For those who held more than one benefice with cure of souls it became imperative, as a result of the papal decree Execrabilis, to obtain the single rectory most valuable to them.<sup>(2)</sup> As has been shown, exchanges reached their peak during the episcopate of John



Buckingham(1363-1398).

In addition this turbulent century witnessed the great revolt in 1381, 'although on the whole', wrote Sir Charles Oman, 'the doings of the Hertfordshire men compare very favourably with those of their neighbours. However, of the two murders reported from the county, one of them (that of an unpopular bailiff at Cublecote) was committed by a band headed by Hugh ,the parson of Puttenham'.<sup>(3)</sup>

The anger of the rebels was directed throughout the country against justices of the peace, commissioners of the Poll Tax, royal officials, abbots and priors. While much violence was shown in Cambridgeshire, the rebellion was not so acute in Huntingdonshire. The town of Huntingdon held aloof from the movement, closed its gates against the rioters and repelled by force the attempt of an armed band to enter.<sup>(4)</sup>

Alongside this rebellion came the rise of heresy in the form of Lollardy. A heretical movement and a major upheaval among the lower orders of society had arrived, in point of time, together. The county of Huntingdon, for the most part, was unaffected by the heresy, but parts of Hertfordshire were, particularly in the fifteenth century. Bishop Chedworth had to deal with a few isolated incidents in Hertfordshire, but otherwise the archdeaconry appears to have been unaffected.

With the sixteenth century came the doctrinal and liturgical reforms which were to have a lasting effect on the Church in England. The clergy of the archdeaconry appear to have held to the old truths, if one may judge from their wills. There is little evidence that change was either

desired or welcomed. John Longland was a conservative bishop and it seems reasonably certain that when he died in 1547 he left a diocese with priests and laity as conservative as he was.<sup>(5)</sup>

The centuries saw an increasing part being played by the laity in the government of their Church. Both churchwardens and gardiani made their views known at episcopal visitations. For years they had shouldered the responsibility of providing funds, albeit under clerical leadership, for repairs to their churches. In the years ahead they would have greater responsibilities laid upon their shoulders. Despite the efforts of the reformers the twin evils of pluralism and absenteeism remained. Training for the priesthood remained a haphazard affair, although a more literate clergy was available. Not until the nineteenth century did the Church in England take seriously the preparation for holy orders.

The clergy who served the people of the parishes often worked hard and long, and largely remain unknown. Some were men who were vulnerable to temptation. The bishops' registers, the handbooks of instruction, written both to improve and instruct and the sermons of admonition have revealed the weaknesses of some. Some were found to be illiterate and were ordered to attend the schools, as has been shown; others were violent, as the odd cases have revealed. Some, undoubtedly, were very poor, while others had much to bequeath in their wills. A few men dressed as laymen and were rebuked. Evidently, from the number of exchanges which took place, some were covetous. However, some of the exchanges were genuine, where a demanding parish

was exchanged for one less demanding.

In many a village the priest was the leader in spiritual and eventually political life. He had more to offer than Ave or Credo. It is significant that when the rebellion came in 1381, it was never directed against village priests at all, but only at Caesarean prelates such as Sudbury who were hated because they were also landlords.

The parish priest, if he were a rector, and often poor and with scant means of support, had, from his small stipend, to provide for repairs to both chancel and rectory. From time to time he would be called upon to meet royal and papal charges upon his dwindling income. Occasionally, he faced clerical rivals in his parish, preaching friars and begging proctors, strolling priests or pardoners, perhaps a chapel of ease, or in towns a friary, all of them striving to draw off more money from the faithful.

Chaucer's immortal portrait of the poor parson is a healthy reminder that there were those good parish priests, men of saintly example in every age who were the friends and counsellors and guides of their people, hospitable to the poor and needy, always ready to visit and console the afflicted, gentle confessors to whom people readily paid their dues. Such a priest might well say,

'My merchandise is this. I have been a priest this forty winters and more, and have fasted, waked and prayed, gone on pilgrimage and preached; and by the mercy of God I have turned many souls to God.' (6)

## Notes

- 1 L.E.Boyle, Pastoral Care, Clerical Education and The Law, 1200 -1400 (London, 1981), VIII,278.
- 2 David Robinson,Beneficed Clergy in Cleveland and The East Riding 1306-1340 (York, 1969), 22.
- 3 C.Oman, The Great Revolt of 1381 (repr.London and California, 1989), 96.
- 4 Ibid. 127-8.
- 5 M.Bowker, The Henrician Reformation: The Diocese of Lincoln Under John Longland, 1521-1547 (Cambridge,1981), 181.
- 6 G.R.Owst, 'The English Parish Church and Its Services In The Later Middle Ages', An Outline of Church History From The Acts Of The Apostles To The Reformation , ed. C.M.Duncan-Jones ( 4 vols. London,1939),III. 106.  
Quoted from an anonymous early English source.

## APPENDIX I.

Patronage: Monastic houses and Their Churches in the  
Archdeaconry of Huntingdon.

### Augustinian Canons

- A. and C. St. Augustine, Bristol: Great Gransden (until  
1301)  
P. and C. Canons Ashby: Puttenham (until 1309)  
P. and C. Bradenstoke: Offley  
A. and C. Huntingdon: Huntingdon, All Saints\*,  
St. Benedict, St. Martin, St. Mary,  
Holy Trinity, Hemingford Grey,  
Great Stukeley, Southoe, Winwick

In addition, Huntingdon Priory also held St. Edmund's church,  
Huntingdon, which was united with St. Mary's in 1312.

St. Botolph's, Huntingdon also belonged to the priory, but  
there are no records of any incumbent being presented to it.

\*The presentation to All Saints, Huntingdon was shared with  
Thorney Abbey.

- A. and C. Lesnes: Cottered (until 1461)  
P. and C. Merton: Alconbury, Godmanchester, Kimpton,  
Yelling.

- A. and C. Missenden: Aldbury (until 1278), Glatton.  
P. and C. Northampton, St. James: Little Gaddesden.  
P. and C. Royston: Chesterton.  
P. and C. Stonely: Kimbolton (from 1378)  
A. and C. Waltham, Holy Cross: Hertford, All Saints.  
P. and C. Little Wymondley: Little Wymondley.

### Benedictines

- A. and C. Colchester, St. John Baptist: Hamerton, Walkern,  
A. and C. Crowland: Folksworth, Morborn, Wasingley.  
P. and C. Hertford (cell of St. Albans): Hertford, St. Mary,  
Pirton.  
A. and C. Peterborough: Alwalton, Fletton.  
A. and C. Ramsey: Brington, Broughton, Ellington, Elton,  
Hemingford Abbots, Holywell, Houghton,  
Huntingdon, St. Andrew, Huntingdon, St.  
Mary (until 1244), Steeple Gidding,  
St. Ives, Warboys, Wistow, Wyton, Ripton  
Abbots, Wood Walton, Little Stukeley,  
Therfield.

A. and C. Reading: Aston.

A. and C. St.Albans: Bramfield, Bygrave, Caldecote(From  
1321), Letchworth, Wallington.

P. and C. St.Neots: Everton, Huntingdon St. Clement, St.  
Neots St. Mary,

A. and C. Thorney: Haddon, Stanground, Stibbington,  
Water Newton, Woodston, Yaxley.

A. and C. Walden: Digswell.

A. and C. Westminster: Aldenham, Ashwell, Offord Cluny  
(from 1452), Stevenage.

#### **Benedictine Nunneries**

A. and C. Elstow: Hitchin, Great Wymondley.

P. and C. Hinchbrook: Huntingdon, St. Peter. ( No names  
of incumbents have been found.).

P. and C. Holywell: Welwyn.

#### **Carthusians**

P. and C. Charterhouse: North Mimms, Great Staughton.

#### **Cistercian**

A. and C. Pipewell: Hinxworth ( from 1344).

#### **Cluniac**

A. and C. Bermondsey(St.Saviour): Bengoe.

P. and C. Lewes: Little Berkhamstead.

P. and C. Wilsford: Hertford, St. Nicholas.

#### **Dominican**

P. and C. Dartford: King's Langley( from 1372), Willian  
(from 1399)

#### **Gilbertine**

P. and C. Malton: King's Walden.

**Hospitallers:** Aspenden, Botolph Bridge, Little Gidding.

#### **Bonshommes:**

Brothers at Ashridge: Hemel Hempstead.

## APPENDIX II.

### Lay Patrons and their Churches

#### Deanery of Berkhamstead

Flamstead In the 12th. century the advowson was sold by the abbot of St.Albans to the lord of the manor. In 1488 the church was granted to the king by Anne, countess of Warwick. In 1546 the church was granted to Sir. Philip Hoby. (V.C.H. Herts. II,199)

Shenley The lords of the manor of Shenley held the patronage: de Mandevilles, Somery, Fitz Reiner etc.

#### Deanery of Hertford

Hertford,, St.Andrew The king as duke of Lancaster.

Hertingfordbury The king as duke of Lancaster.

Essendon The king as duke of Lancaster.

Datchworth The lords of the manor : de Burgh, Gilbert de Wauton.

Stapleford The lords of the manor of Watton, Aquillon, Bardolf.

Watton at Stone The lords of the manor of Watton Woodhall: Turveys, Peletot, Boteler (Butler).

Sacombe The lords of the manor.

Ayot St.Peter(Ayot Mountfichet) The lords of the manor: Mountfichet (Sometimes Mountfichet),de Lacy etc.

Ayot St.Lawrence The lords of the manor; T. Barre, W.Say in 1508.

#### Deanery of Baldock

Benington The lords of the manor.

Great Munden The lords of the manor.

Clothall lords of the manor. Simon de Clothall, de Hauvills, Rede. Blount.

Westmill The lords of the manor: Lewknores,de Valence,

Willian The lords of the manor: de Pavilly,Peyure.

Willian In 1394 the king conveyed the advowson to the P. and C. of Dartford on behalf of the friars of the Order of Preachers. (C.P.L.1391-6, 373.)

Bygrave The de Sumery family are found presenting to the living from 1220; but the church was originally given to St.Albans abbey.( Monasticon ii,229).

Little Munden The lords of the manor, de Scales, de Mundens.

Hinxworth The lords of the manor: Cantilupes, Montalts, la Zouche, In 1344 the advowson was given to the A. and C. of Pipewell. (C.P.R. 1343-5,198,243).

Radwell The lords of the manor.

Throcking The lords of the manor; Fitz Brian, J. de Argentinein, W. Butler.

Walkern The lords of the manor: H. de Villers. Advowson given to A. and C. Colchester. ( C.Ch.R.1226-57, 424; Cart. Mon. St. Jn. Bapt., Colchester,i,200).

Wakeley The lords of the manor: R.Morley in 1454. No presentations were made after that date.

Caldecote The lords of the manor: G. de Furnivall.

Broadfield The lords of the manor of Broadfield from 1222 became possessed of the advowson on a quitclaim of W.Basset, lord of the manor of Rushden.(F.of F. Herts.,6 Hen.III, no.45).

**Deanery of Hitchin**

Chesfield The lords of the manor. Usually linked with Graveley. Often ownership of the advowson was disputed. In 1331 the advowson was confirmed to Hugh FitzSimon. ( F. of F. ,Herts.Div..Co.5 Edward III, no. 101)

Graveley The advowson was held, after many disputes, by the lords of the manor of Symondshyde in Hatfield.

Knebworth The lords of the manor held the advowson. The Andeville family held it during the thirteenth century, and later held by the de Meunys and their heirs to the manor.



### Deanery of St. Neots

- Eynesbury Earls of Winchester , and the de Ferrars family held the advowson.
- Waresley Engayne family held the advowson which was handed over to the new foundation at Cambridge, the Mary de Valence Hall (Later Pembroke College) in 1377.
- Fenstanton Several lay patrons held the living: after Joan of Scotland , the Segrave family , later earls of Nottingham. In 1397 the D. and C. of the Free Chapel Royal of St. Stephen, Westminster became patrons.
- Offord D'Arcy The lords of the manor of Offord held the advowson. From 1485 the Shelley family held it.
- Great Staughton The lords of the manor: N. de Criol, W. de Haringod, de Creting family. Advowson passed to the crown in 1377. (C.P.L.1377-81, 80). It was granted to the P. and C. of Charterhouse in 1381. (C.P.L.1381-5, 37, 51.)
- Diddington Littlebury family held the advowson. Merton Coll. Oxford received the advowson and presented in 1278.

### Deanery of St. Ives

The churches of Bluntisham and Somersham were in the patronage of the bishops of Ely. Ripton Regis had the king as patron. All other parishes had monastic patrons.

### Deanery of Leightonstone

- Grafham Vitalis de Grafham and his heirs held the advowson until the manor was acquired by the Engayne family c.1272. From this date the patronage followed the descent of the manor of the Gloucester fee, held by the Engaynes, and succeeded by the Broughton family.
- Kimbolton De Bohuns held the advowson until 1366 when it was given to Stonely Priory. in 1366. (C.P.R.1364-7) 227, 297).

Swineshead     The de Bohun family held the advowson from 1333. It passed through the female line to the dukes of Buckingham.

Keyston        The de Ferrars family held the advowson from 1255.

Covington      The advowson and the manor of Covington were held together until the manor was sold in 1614. They were in the hands of the Bayous family from the late thirteenth century.

Great Catworth     The advowson was held by the de Bekering family until it was purchased in 1675 by Brasenose College, Oxford.

Molesworth      The advowson was tied up with the manor. Walter de Lindsey presented in 1220, and subsequent lords of the manor; Draytons, Symons, de la Warr family, Morton family.

Coppingford     In 1225 the advowson was held by the Costentin family who took the name of Copmanford. (V.C.H. Hunts., iii, 36).

Buckworth       The advowson was held with the manor of Buckworth.

Upton            The advowson was held by the lords of the manor: de Rand family, Gobaud from 1273, Colvilles, Sapcote until 1592.

Woolley          Advowson was held by the lords of the manor. The de Chartes family held it until 1355. The Fitzwith family until 1414. The earl of Worcester's feoffees presented from 1474-1483, then the earl himself. The Lovel family held the advowson until 1618.

#### **Deanery of Yaxley**

Orton Waterville     R. de Waterville, kt. made the first recorded presentation in 1248. The advowson and were sold, and William Thorpe, kt. presented in 1344. In 1467 the advowson passed to John, earl of Worcester, lord of the manor of Orton Waterville. The advowson was acquired by Archbishop

Laurence Booth and passed to Pembroke College,  
Cambridge in 1481.(C.P.R.1476-85 ,232)

Orton Longueville In 1247 John de Longueville held the  
advowson which continued to be held with the  
manor until 1916. It was held in succession by  
the Braybrooks, Lovetots, Beauchamps,Lamb and  
Kirkham of Warmington.

Conington The advowson followed the chief manor of Coning-  
ton. The de Brus family held it until 1331.  
Agnes, wife of John de Deen( relict of Bernard de  
Brus)presented, after a resolved dispute, in 1331.  
Various lords of the manor, the Lovetots,Grenes,  
Wesenhams and Calpeper family presented thereafter.

Sawtry All Saints Hervey le Moyne appears to be the patron  
in the late twelfth century(Chron.Rames.,ii,154).  
The family held the living ,which is sometimes  
called Sawtry Moigne, until the early fifteenth  
century. On the death of Mary,widow of William  
Moyne,kt. in 1411,the advowson together with the  
manor was divided amongst three heirs.(P.R.O.Anct.  
Deeds, D677). Ramsey Abbey benefited from this  
and gave their two shares in the advowson to  
Sawtry Abbey which presented in 1487. The present-  
thereafter was shared with John Clarevaux in 1488.  
The Clarevaux presented solely after that .

Sawtry St.Andrew From 1245 the de Beaumeis family presented  
to the living which was also known as Sawtry  
Beaumes.The Lowthe family presented in 1462 until  
1533,when several appeared to hold the advowson.

Denton The advowson was held with the manor of Denton  
until the nineteenth century. Roger Ingoldsby,Kt.  
presented in 1259, followed by members of the  
Grym family. In 1387 the Burton family held the  
advowson, and presented to the living until 1421.  
From 1424 until 1486 the Greneham family presented.  
Thereafter until 1747 the Cotton family held the  
advowson.

Caldecot For a time Robert de Brus was patron of the living .

The king presented from 1308, because of de Brus' rebellion and continued to do so until 1351 when John, duke of Kent presented. It remained in the hands of the crown afterwards.

Washingley Richard de Washingley acquired the advowson from the A. and C. Crowland at the beginning of the thirteenth century in exchange for a virgate of land. (Rot. Hund. ii, 635). The advowson followed the descent of the manor of Washingley In 1446 the advowson was granted to Richard, duke of York, During the minority of John Drew (C.P.R. 1446-1452, 84). In 1447 the church was pronounced ruinous.

#### **Deanery of Huntingdon**

The churches of Brampton and Bucken were both prebendal churches, and the remaining churches in the deanery, all of which were in the town of Huntingdon, had monastic patrons until the dissolution of the monasteries.

# APPENDIX III.

## Tables of Assessments made on Clerical Income from 1254 - 1535 in the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon

### 1. Deanery of Berkhamstead

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio(1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Liber Valorum (1535-6)</u>
Puttenham	5 marks	£6 13. 4d.	£8 0. 0.	£10 1. 0.
Aldbury	8 marks	£6 0. 0.	£16 0. 0.	£20 8. 0.
Northchurch (Berk'd St.Mary)	18 marks	£14 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.	£21 1. 2.
Gt.Berkhamstead	18 marks	£10 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.
Gt. Gaddesden	18 marks	£13 6. 8.	£10 0. 0.	£10 1. 10.
Hemel Hempstead	40 marks	£33 6. 8.	£13 6. 8.	£16 1. 10.
King's Langley	15 marks	£13 6. 8.	£10 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.
Shenley	16 marks	£13 6. 8.	£15 0. 0.	£16 8. 0.
North Mimms	14 marks	£16 13.4.	£10 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.
Wheathampstead	8 marks	£13 6.8.	£33 6. 8.	£42 1. 10.
Kensworth	12 marks	£10 0.0.	£8 0. 0.	£9 13. 4.
Flamstead	25 marks	£20 0.0.	£33 13.4.	£41 6. 8.
Lit.Gaddesden	5 marks	£6 0.0.	£9 6.8.	£9 12.8.

Note: The original returns for Hertfordshire deaneries are lost, the deficiency is supplied from the Liber Valorum, preserved in the County Record Office, Hertford.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio(1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Liber.Valorum</u> (1535-6)
Aldenham	18 marks	£22 13. 4.	£23 13. 4.	£24 0 0.
Tring	40 marks	£36 13. 4.	£69 0. 0.	£77 13. 4.
w.Wiggington	3 marks	(incl. w. Tring)		
Bovingdon	_____	_____	£6 0. 0.	_____
Harpenden	_____	_____	£6 13. 4.	_____
<b>2. Deanery of Hertford</b>				
Bengeo	12 marks	£10 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.	£7 8. 6.
Hertford St. Mary	4 marks	£ 3 0. 0.	_____	_____
All Saints	10 marks	_____	£8 0. 0.	£10 8. 6.
St. Nicholas	5 marks	£ 1 0. 0.	£4 1. 4.	-76/-
Lit. St. Mary	1 mark	_____	_____	_____
St. Andrew	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	£15 10. 8.	£ 8 11.2.
Lit. Berkhamstead	8 marks	£6 0. 0.	£ 8. 8. 0.	£ 7 8.6.
Hertingfordbury	10 marks	£8 0. 0.	£ 8. 8. 0.	£12 15.1.
Essendon with	20 marks	£17 6. 8.	£ 8. 0. 0.	£18 0.0.
Bayford	_____	_____	£ 5 6. 8.	_____
Ayot St. Peter	6 marks	£4 6. 8.	_____	£ 8 13.6.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val.of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio(1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Liber Valorum</u> (1535-6)
Ayot St.Lawrence	5 marks	£4 13. 4.	£9 0. 0.	£8 13. 4.
Welwyn	20 marks	£16 13. 4.	£20 0. 0.	£21 0. 0.
Tewin	10 marks	£7 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£14 0. 0.
Bramfield	9 marks	£6 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£11 6. 6.
Datchworth	9 marks	£6 13. 4.	£13 6. 8.	£14 13. 4.
Stapleford	100s.	£6 13. 4.	£ 9 0. 0.	£8 8. 6.
Watton at Stone	20 marks	£15 6. 8.	£20 0. 0.	
Sacombe	100 shillings	£7 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.	£10 3. 4.
Digswell	3 marks	£6 13. 4.	£ 7 6. 8.	£7 4. 0.
Hatfield	40 marks	£36 13. 4.	£32 0. 0.	£36 2. 0.
Totteridge	4 marks	£3 6. 8.	£6 0. 0.	

Note: The chapel of Totteridge is included in the Liber Valorum total for Hatfield.

3.

### Deanery of Hitchin

Hitchin	40 marks	£40 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.	£25 6. 8.
Temple Disney	40s.			
Gt.Wymondley	30s.	£4 6. 8.	£5 0. 0.	£6 0. 0.
Graveley	10 marks	£6 13. 4.	£12 0. 0.	£12 0. 8.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio(1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Liber Valorum</u>
Lt.Wymondley	5 marks	_____	£4 0. 0.	_____
Stevenage	25 marks	£26 13. 0.	£26 13. 4.	£33 6. 8.
Knebworth	12 marks	£8 0. 0.	£13 6. 8.	£13 1. 10.
Kimpton	30 marks	£16 13. 4.	£13 6. 8.	£12 0. 0.
Offley	30 marks	£21 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£9 0. 0.
King's Walden	30 marks	£20 0. 0.	£5 6. 8.	_____
Lilley	6 marks	£5 6. 8.	£10 0. 0.	£19 8. 6.
Pirton	30 marks	£21 6. 8.	£5 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.
Letchworth	7 marks	£8 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.	£11 1. 10.
Chivesfield	5 marks	£4 13. 4.	_____	_____

- Notes: 1) In the Liber Valorum Pirton is grouped with the vicarage of Ickleford which is not even mentioned in either the Valuation of Norwich or the Taxatio. It does occur in the Subsidy of 1526 as a separate item and is valued at £7 0. 0.
- 2) Chivesfield is not mentioned in the Subsidy, but is included under Graveley in the Liber Valorum.
- 3) The parish of St.Ippolyts is not mentioned until 1526, where it is valued at £7 and at 100s. in the Liber Valorum.



#### 4. Deanery of Baldock

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val.of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio (1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy (1526)</u>	<u>Liber Valorum</u>
Therfield	40 marks	£33 6. 8.	£44 0. 0.	£50 0. 0.
Bennington	25 marks	£20 0. 0.	£18 0. 0.	£19 0. 0.
Gt. Munden	25 marks	£21 6. 8.	£22 0. 0.	£16 0. 6.
Clothall	20 marks	£14 3. 4.	£10 13. 4.	£16 0. 6.
Cottered	20 marks	£8 0. 0.	£13 0. 0.	£20 8. 6.
Ardleigh	20 marks	£12 0. 0.	£13 6. 8.	£12 0. 0.
Westmill	20 marks	£14 13. 4.	£23 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.
Sandon	15 marks	£14 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£9 0. 0.
Ashwell	40 marks	£26 13. 4.	£22 0. 0.	£22 3. 6.
Willian	16 marks	£13 6. 8.	£17 12. 11.	—
Kelshall	15 marks	£13 6. 4.	£12 0. 0.	£21 0. 0.
Walkern	15 marks	£13 6. 8.	£14 0. 0.	£20 1. 10.
Bygrave	15 marks	£10 0. 0.	£16 0. 0.	£17 10. 5.
Rushden	10 marks	£10 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£8 1. 10.
Lit.Munden	15 marks	£11 6. 8.	£22 0. 0.	£15 0. 0.
Aston	15 marks	£11 6. 8.	£28 0. 0.	£26 11. 6.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio (1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Liber Valorum (1535-6)</u>
Hinxworth	15 marks	£12 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.	£16 0. 0.
Aspenden	10 marks	£8 0. 0.	£16 0. 0.	£15 5. 2.
Radwell	5 marks	£4 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£13 6. 8.
Throcking	5 marks	£4 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.
Wakeley*	3 marks	£4 13. 4.	_____	_____
Caldecote	3 marks	£4 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.
Wallington	10 marks	£8 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.	£15 15. 2.
Broadfield	1 mark	_____	_____	_____
Weston	20 marks	£4 6. 8.	59 13. 4.	£10 6. 8.
Baldock	_____	_____	£13 6. 8.	£10 8. 6.

\* Wakeley is now a farm.

#### 5. Deanery of St. Neots

St. Neots	30 marks	£21 6. 8.	£20 0. 0.	£18 0. 0.
Eynesbury	15 marks	£10 0. 0.	£32 0. 0.	£33 6. 8.
Everton	15 marks	£6 13 4 £11 6. 8.	_____	£6 16. 10.
Abbotsley	30 marks	£24 0. 0.	£10 13. 4.	_____

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val.of Norwich (1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio (1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy (1526)</u>	<u>Valor Eccles.</u>
Waresley	15 marks	£13 6. 8.	£9 13. 4.	£8 19. 8.
Gt.Gransden	40 marks	£33 6. 8.	£9 0. 0.	_____
Yelling	10 marks	£12 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.
Fen Stanton	30 marks	£30 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.	£12 9. 4.
Hemingford Grey	15 marks	£11 6. 8.	£10 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.
Hemingford Abbots	20 marks	£16 13. 4.	£22 13. 4.	£26 13. 4.
Godmanchester	40 marks	£40 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.	£18 19. 4.
Offord Cluny	12 marks	£13 6. 8.	£13 6. 8.	£19 12 3.
Offord D'Arcy	100s.	£5 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£18 3. 8.
Paxton	40 marks	£26 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£16 6. 1.
Gt.Staughton	30 marks	£26 13. 4.	£20 0. 0.	£20 0. 0.
Southoe	24 marks	£16 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.	_____
Diddington	12 marks	£11 6. 8.	£7 6. 8.	£8 14. 4.

#### 6. Deanery of St. Ives

Houghton cum Witton	22 marks	£33 6. 8.	£26 13. 4.	£41 18. 2.
Holywell	20 marks	£13 6. 8.	£20 0. 0.	£31 0. 0.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio (1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Valor Eccles.</u>
Broughton	15 marks	£13 6. 8.	£20 0. 0.	£22 17. 8.
Wistow	10 marks	£5 6. 8.	£15 13. 4.	£11 15. 0.
Abbots Ripton	20 marks	£23 6. 8.	£20 0. 0.	£22 0. 0.
Lit.Stukeley	12 marks	£10 13. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£14 3. 8.
Hartford	10 marks	58 13. 4.	£5 6. 8.	£4 11. 8.
Bluntisham	15 marks	£13 6. 8.	£33 6. 8.	£33 6. 8.
Somersham	23 marks	£33 6. 8.	£30 13. 2.	£51 5. 11.
King's Ripton	10 marks	£8 15. 4.	£8 13. 4.	£12 10. 4.
Warboys	23 marks	£20 0. 0.	£26 13. 4.	£30 3. 4.
St.Ives	24 marks	£25 0. 0.	£15 0. 0.	£18 18. 2.
Gt. Stukeley	20 marks	£15 6. 8	£9 0. 0.	£6 17. 4.
<b>7. Deanery of Leightonstone</b>				
Ellington	11 marks	£23 6. 8.	£24 0. 0.	£22 0. 0.
Grafham	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	£13 6. 8.	£18 4. 2.
Kimbolton	25 marks	£22 13. 4.	£6 0. 0.	<hr/>
Swineshead	5 marks	£4 13. 4.	£8 0. 0.	£13 3. 2.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio (1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Valor Eccles.</u>
Keyston	20 marks	£18 13. 4.	£18 0. 0.	£30 1. 6.
Covington	8 marks	£8 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.	£10 12. 3.
Gt. Catworth	18 marks	£16 13. 4.	£16 0. 0.	£18 13. 4.
Molesworth	5 marks	£4 13. 4.	£9 0. 0.	£12 6. 6.
Brington	30 marks	£30 0. 0.	£24 0. 0.	£35 3. 5.
Thurning	9 marks	£8 0. 0.	£9 0. 0.	£12 0. 0.
Hamerton	10 marks	£4 13. 4.	£16 6. 8.	£19 15. 4.
Winwick	10 marks	£8 0. 0.	£6 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.
Lit.Gidding	5 marks	£5 6. 8.	£5 13. 4.	£7 9. 8.
Steeple Gidding	5 marks	£6 0. 0.	£6 0. 0.	£9 5. 9.
Coppingford	5 marks	£4 13. 4.	£20 0. 0.	£19 11. 0.
Buckworth	16 marks	£18 13. 4.	£19 6. 8.	£22 0. 8.
Upton (1)	10 marks	£6 13. 4.	£4 10. 4.	
Woolley	5 marks	£5 0. 0.	£10 0. 0.	£9 19. 6.
Alconbury	11 marks	£33 6. 8.	£12 0. 0.	£9 15. 7.
Gt. Gidding	15 marks	£13 6. 8.	£8 0. 0.	£8 8. 4.

Note 1. Upton is included in the Coppingford figures in the Valor Ecclesiasticus.

# 8 Deanery of Yaxley

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val.of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio (1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Eccles.</u>
Elton	23 marks	£23 6. 8.	£33 13. 4.	£27 9. 0.
Stibbington	16 marks	£12 0. 0.	£9 0. 0.	£9 0. 0.
Water Newton	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	£8 0. 0.	£8 12. 4.
Chesterton	13 marks	£12 0. 0.	£12 0. 0.	£20 8. 4.
Alwalton	12 marks	£9 6. 8.	£15 0. 0.	£9 19. 0.
Orton Waterville	10 marks	£10 0. 0.	£13 6. 8.	£13 4. 8.
Orton Longueville	9 marks	£6 13. 4.	£9 6. 8.	£12 19. 8.
Botolph Bridge	10 marks	£5 6. 8.	£12 0. 0.	£9 13. 4.
Woodston	10 marks	£8 0. 0.	£9 0. 0.	£8 11. 2.
Fletton	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£9 16. 10.
Stanground	25 marks	£20 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.	£6 6. 10.
Yaxley	25 marks	£35 6. 8.	£11 0. 0.	£11 0. 0.
Stilton	100 shillings	£6 13. 4.	£13 0. 0.	£12 6. 8.
Covington	18 marks	£20 0. 0.	£13 6. 8.	£20 3. 2.
Sawtry All Saints	8 marks	£8 0. 0.	£8 0. 0.	£9 3. 0.
Sawtry St.Andrew	6 marks	£6 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£8 8. 5.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Val. of Norwich(1254)</u>	<u>Taxatio(1291)</u>	<u>Subsidy(1526)</u>	<u>Valor Eccles.</u> (1535-6)
Wood Walton	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	£9 0. 0.	£11 9. 9.
Glatton	20 marks	£21 3. 4.	£9 0. 0.	£26 18. 8.
Denton	4 marks	£4 13. 4.	£5 6. 8.	£6 3. 2.
Caldecot	3 marks	_____	£7 0. 0.	£7 13. 4.
Washingley	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	_____	_____
Folksworth	5 marks	£6 13. 4.	£7 0. 0.	£9 3. 6.
Morborn	8 marks	£6 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£12 14. 2.
Haddon	8 marks	£10 13. 4.	£10 0. 0.	£12 3. 2.

#### 9. Deanery of Huntingdon

Huntingdon St.John	3 marks	_____	£6 0. 0.
All Saints	4 marks	_____	£12 0. 0.
St.Mary	10 marks	£4 13. 4.	£6 0. 0.
St.Benedict	vix valet servicium	_____	£5 6. 8.

I have found no entries for Huntingdon parishes in the Valor Ecclesiasticus.

# APPENDIX IV.

Fraternities and Guilds found within some parishes in  
the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon

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<u>Parish</u>	<u>Guild</u>	<u>Reference</u>
Ashwell	St. John Baptist (1476)	P.R.O. C.C.27, 13. C.P.R.1467-1473,597.
Baldock	Fraternity or Brotherhood of Jesus 1459	V.C.H. Herts.iii, 67.
Conington	Trinity Guild (No date)	Hunt.R.O.Wills VI, fos.38-9. J.North(1536).
Fenstanton	Brotherhood of Our Lady (No date)	Ibid.VI, fo.79. J.More
Glatton	Guild of Holy Trinity Guild of St.Mary (No date)	Ibid. II,fo.31. W.Bond
Godmanchester	Trinity Guild Corpus Christi (No date)	P.R.O.MS.DL 38/5.
Hemingford Abbots	Guild Our Lady (No date)	Hunt.R.O.Wills IV,fo.58 Wm.Pater (1531)
Hertford, All Saints	Guild of St. John Baptist	V.C.H.Herts.iv,305.
Hitchin	Guild of St.Mary 1475	C.P.R.1467-77,542.
Stevenage	Guild of the Holy Trinity (No date)	Hunt. R.O.Wills II,fo.261. R.Carlton(1523)
Stilton	Guild of St. John (No date)	Ibid.III,25 N.Claybrooke(1527)
Tring	Guild of the Blessed Trinity 9No date)	Ibid.VI,fo.48. J.Lake (1534)



<u>Parish</u>	<u>Guild</u>	<u>Reference</u>
Yaxley	Guilds of	Hunt.R.O.Wills,
	Holy Trinity	I,fo.23
	St.John Baptist	John Best(1487).
	St.Katherine	Ibid.II,fos.86-87.
	St.Peter	William Pers
	Holy Cross	(1508)
	St.George	
	St.Giles	

APPENDIX V.

Transcript of rents received from obit lands in the county  
of Huntingdon 1548, transcribed from the P.R.O. MS.DL 38/5

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County of Huntingdon, Town of Huntingdon.

The Parish of St. John Baptist

obit land	One house and rectory land in the tenure of Nicholas Maye, paying yearly the parson's obit forever      iijs
obit land copyhold	One acre and iiij roods of meadow copyhold in the tenure of Robert Busshe paying yearly vs vid for one obit forever. Resolute -----vd obit Remayneth -----iiijjs viid
lamp rent	One yearly rent of xvjd going out of a close or croft called Dovehouse close in the tenure of a lamp forever      xvid
obit land	xi acres of ay(sic) land in Stewkly fields in the tenure of William Harewood paying yearly vs for one obit forever.      vs      whereof To the poor yearly ijs iiijd Remayneth                      ijs viiij

St Benet's Parish

obit land	iiij acres and a half of arr land whereof in the tenure of William Harewood ij acres and a half the other acre in the tenure of Richard Harewood paying in the (w)hole year ly ijs iiijd for one obit forever. ----- ijs iiijd whereof Resolute ----- vijd Remayneth -iijs vjd
obit land copyhold	iiij acres of meadow copyhold in the tenure of the churchwardens paying yearly xs for one obit forever -----xs whereof Resolute ----- xviiij To the poor-----vs Remayneth -----iijs vjd

The Parish of Trinity

obit land copyhold	v acres of ar(able) land in the tenure of William Hinde- paying yearly vjs viiij for one obit forever vjs viiij whereof
-----------------------	---

Resolute ----- xxd  
To the poor --- iiij s  
Remayneth --- xij d

obit land iiij acres of meadow copyhold lying in porthouse  
copyhold in Brampton in the tenure of the churchwardens  
paying yearly xs for one obit forever xs  
whereof

Resolute ----- xviiij d  
To the poor --- vjs xd  
Remayneth --- xxd

obit tenement One tenement or cottage in the tenure of  
Thomas Swefnham paying yearly vjs viij d for  
one obit forever ----- vj viij d whereof  
To the poor ----- iiij s viij d  
Remayneth ----- ijs

#### St. Mary's Parish

obit land One acre of meadow copyhold in the tenure of  
copyhold Bartholomew Myllett paying yearly iijs vjd for  
one obit forever iijs vjd whereof  
Resolute ----- vjd  
To the poor ----- xij d  
Remayneth ----- ijs

obit land ij acres of meadow in the tenure of the church-  
wardens lying in porthome paying yearly viijs  
for one obit forever viijs whereof  
To the poor ----- vs viij d  
Remayneth ----- iis iiij d

chantry One chantry there founded to assist the curate  
there being in the town viij s (?) howsling -  
people. And to keep a grammar school teaching  
- children in the same end, so hath been and  
yet is used. Intended to continue forever, having  
for the maintenance thereof certain other free  
lands and tenements to the yearly value of xls  
which is in the whole viij<sup>li</sup> ijs xjd  
Resolute ----- xxxiijs ijd ,ob viz fre ijs  
ijd ob/ copy xxxjs

Remayneth ----- vj<sup>li</sup> ixs ixd

goods goods and implements remayning None.

Godmanchester

Guild One Guild here called Corpus Christi Guild begun by the devotion of the parishioners to have a priest to sing Mass and intended to have continuance forever having for the maintenance ..... there Brenten(?) lands and tenements held by copy of (obscure here) to the yearly value of xj<sup>li</sup> xiiijd whereof is employed yearly to the stipend of the priest vj<sup>li</sup>. Thereof to the payment of the king's fee farm of Godmanchester. Stipendiary there being one Edmund Arshback of the age of lx years having none other living, And being not able to farm a cure for age.

Resolute ----- lj s iijd  
Remayneth - viij<sup>li</sup> ixs xid.

goods Goods and implements remayning. None

Guild One other guild there of The Trinity ordained upon the devotion of the inhabitants and intended to have yearly for the maintenance thereof certain copyhold lands and tenements to the yearly value of iij<sup>li</sup> viijs ixd Held by (?) by copyhold

Resolute ----- xij s jd  
Remayneth ---- ljs viijd

goods Goods and implements remaining. None.

lightland one acre of meadow in the tenure of Thomas Trice paying yearly ijs viijd for lights forever ijs viijd

Resolute to the bailiffs of Godmanchester vjd  
Remayneth ----- ijs ijd

lamp land viij (th) acres of meadow copyhold in the tenure of William Aldred paying yearly xxiijs for two lamps forever -----xxiijs

Resolute ----- iijs  
Remayneth ----- xxs

Salary            One salary or stipend there ordained to continue  
forever having for the maintenance thereof  
certain lands in the tenure of William Cooper  
paying yearly xvj s . Certain land in the  
tenure of Silvester Betette paying yearly viijs  
ijd. And certain lands lying in Keston in the  
tenure of Thomas Bulkins, bailey thereof paying  
yearly ijs viijd in the whole xxvjs xd.

Total            xxviij<sup>li</sup> vijs vijd

Freeland        v<sup>li</sup> xiiijd

Resolute and poor    --- xxjs vijd ob.

Remayneth            --- iiij<sup>li</sup> xd ob.

Copyland        ----    --- xxij<sup>li</sup> xxijjd whereof inc.  
v<sup>li</sup> iiis viijd ob. -- xijs xd

Resolute and poor    --v<sup>li</sup> xvjs vjd ob.

Remayneth        -----xvii<sup>li</sup> vs iiijd ob.

Rents out of freeland    ----xvjd

Resolute        ----- none

Sum. patet        -----

Clare-----xxj<sup>li</sup> vijs vijd

Memorandum that the forenamed towns of Huntingdon, Godman-  
chester and Glatton in Holme be also the only towns  
belonging to the Duchy within the said County of Huntingdon.

## APPENDIX VI

Below are examples of four sixteenth century wills made before and after the Henrician reformation: two are made by clergy and two by lay people. Modern spelling has been used.

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Court of the Archdeacon of Huntingdon, vol.III,fo.25  
Anno Domini: 1527:Testamentum Nicholai Claybroke nuper de  
Sticleton (Stilton)

In dei no(min)e Amen. the xvj day of September in the year of our Lord God MDCCCCXXVII I Nicholas Claybroke of Stilton being of whole mind and memory,make my testament and last will in this manner following. First I bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, and to his Blessed Mother our Lady Saint Mary and to all the holy company of heaven and my body to be buried within the church of Stilton aforesaid.

Item, I bequeath for my mortuary my best good(s) after use and custom of the town.

Item,I bequeath to the mother church of Lincoln 4d.

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of Stilton aforesaid for tithes and oblations by me negligently forgotten if any such be for the discharge of my soul 12d.

Item, I bequeath unto the guild of St.John in the foresaid church 12d.

Item, I bequeath towards the keeping and maintenance of the light before St. Katherine in the said church 8d.

Item, I bequeath to a priest to sing a trental of masses in the foresaid church for my soul and for all Christian souls 10s. Item, I bequeath unto our Lady of Boston 12d.

I bequeath to Robert Claybroke, my son, £20 with sheep and two milch ewes and also my spruce chest with the one half of all the linen therein and also two brass pots and a mattress and a feather bed, a bolster and a pillow.

Item, I bequeath to Nicholas Claybroke, my son, £20 with sheep and two milch ewes and also the other half of the linen in the foresaid spruce chest and also six silver spoons and a small silver goblet and a spruce counter, two brass pots, a featherbed and a pillow and two iron 'steads and a pair of bellows, a pair of tongs, two fire(?) hammers a hand hammer and a nailing hammer with all other implements of mine pertaining and belonging to the said shop.

Item, I bequeath to Robert Claybroke, my son, the one half of my of all my wearing raiment.

Item, I bequeath to Nicholas Claybroke, my son, the other half of of all my raiment. Provided always if the foresaid Robert Claybroke, my son, shall die or he come to the age of 21 years that then I will that Nicholas Claybroke, my son, shall have and enjoy all his 'foresaid bequests and so likewise that (the) said Robert Claybroke to have of the 'fore - said Nicholas Claybroke. And if it shall fortune both my said sons to die or (ere) they shall come to the age of 21 years then i will that the foresaid bequests shall be sold by my executors and supervisor to the most advantage and the money thereof shall find a priest to sing for my soul and for their souls and all the christian souls at the said disposition of my foresaid executors and supervisor. The residue of all my goods wheresoever they be or bequeathed I give and bequeath to Alice, my wife, to pay my debts and my bequests whom I make my faithful executrix and also Edward Kingston of Folksworth to whom I give and bequeath for his diligent labour and business 5s. Also I make my son, Br. Thomas Claybroke, canon(?) , supervisor of this my testament and last will. To whom I give and bequeath to pray for my soul £6.

Witnessed by Sir Thomas Cooke, my ghostly (spiritual) father,  
Humphrey Biknell, John Wark. John Redhead, Br. Francis Grene  
and others.

Probate granted at Stilton on 1 October, 1527.

This is a typical example of a will made before the effects  
of the acts of the Reformation parliament became apparent.

The will below is taken from the first year of the reign  
of Edward VI, two months after the death of Henry VIII.

Court of the Archdeacon of Huntingdon, vol. VIII.fo.139<sup>r</sup>.

The will of Thomas Gaddysby

In the name of God Amen. The xj day of March in the year of  
our Lord God MCCCCXIVII I Thomas Gaddisby of Godmanchester  
in the diocese of Lincoln, being of whole mind and memory,  
thanks be unto God, maketh my testament and last will in  
this manner following.

First I bequeath my soul to God omnipotent and to his blessed  
mother Mary and to all saints and my body to be buried in the  
church yard of Godmanchester aforesaid.

Item, I bequeath to Robert Holt(?) dwelling in St. Neots my  
tawny coat.

Item, I bequeath to Sander Beyne one half acre of meadow  
lying in the west mead next the meadow of the town being in  
the hands of Thomas Par(r)y, lying in the been(?) the said  
Sander to have it after the decease of Agnes my wife and not  
before.

Item, I bequeath to Robert Aspelond and Joan Aspelond the  
son and daughter of Henry Aspelond one acre meadow lying in  
the reed mead to be equally divided between the said Robert  
and Joan, they to have it after the decease of Agnes, my wife  
and not before.



The residue of all my goods , lands ,that is to say, meadows, lays and tenements lying and being in the town and in the meadows and lays of Godmanchester aforesaid to Agnes my wife her heir and assigns for evermore.

Item, I bequeath to the said Agnes my wife all my movable goods, she to bring my body honestly to the grave and to dispose for me as she shall think most expedient for the welfare of my soul and all Christian souls. The said Agnes my wife I ordain and make my sole executrix of this my last will and testament.

Witnesses of this my last will and testament Thomas Parry and Robert Furmery, with other men.

Probate was granted at St.Mary's Church, Huntingdon on 13 April, 1548.

The testator, like many others at the end of Henry VIII's reign, begins his will with the traditional catholic preamble, but thereafter he makes no bequests to his parish church or to the lights or to the poor. However, his request his body be brought honestly to the grave and that his should consider the welfare of his soul could of course conceal a wish for a requiem Mass and anniversaries.

#### Clerical Wills

Court of the Archdeacon of Huntingdon : Wills, vol.II fo.239<sup>r-v</sup>.

#### The will of William Smythe, parson of Great Catworth

In the name of God Amen. The xx th. day of the month of June in the year of our Lord God MCCCCXXVIII I William Smythe parson of Great Catworth ,whole of mind and of remembrance, make my testament in this wise.

First, I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, our lady, St.Mary and to all the company of heaven, my body to be buried in the

chancel of St. Leonard of Catworth aforesaid. Also I bequeath to every priest being at my dirige and singing mass for my soul viijd.

Item, I bequeath to every clerk that can sing a lesson, ijd.

Item, I bequeath to a table carving of St. Leonard  
in timber work £3.

Item, I will that the aforesaid table be gilded at my cost and charge.

Item, I will and bequeath (a) penny dole.

Item, I bequeath to the bells vjs. viijd.

Item, I bequeath to Agnes Fuller to her marriage £3 6s. 8d.

Item, to the said Agnes certain household stuff at the discretion of my executors.

Item, I bequeath to the making of ij tabernacles in the church of Tuckforth (unidentified) at either altar end one of St. Mary Magdalen £6 6s. 8d.

Item, I bequeath to the mending of the highway at box weir in Catworth vs.

Item, I bequeath to a priest to sing for my father and my mother and me ij years £10 13s. 4d.

Item, I bequeath to every child of my brother xiijs. iiijd.

Item, I give power to my executors to augment and ministry to change and alter my will and legacy as it shall seem best to them.

Item, I bequeath to Master Gabriel Betull, my godson, vjs. viijd.

Item, I bequeath to Edie Bishop, my goddaughter iijs. iiijd.

Item, I bequeath to William Tailor, my godson 12d.

Item, I Bequeath to Robert Bays, my godson xijd.

Item, I bequeath to St. Neot's bridge vjs. viijd.

The residue of all my goods not said and unbequeathed I give and bequeath them unto M. James Stephen, vicar of Eton, Sir Thomas Burges, parish priest of Eton and Thomas Dixie of Catworth, the which Master James Stephen, Br. Thomas Burges and Thomas Dixie I ordain and make my lawful executors so that they give dole and dispose that may be most pleasing to God and expedient for my soul.

To this my will being witness, Sir Thomas Coley, Bro. Robert Rose and Peter Coley, priest.

Probate granted at St. Ives parish church on 27 July, 1528.

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The later will of Roger Hadfield, formerly vicar of Rushden, shows signs of a more protestant influence.

Court of the Archdeacon of Huntingdon: Wills vol. VIII. fo. 92<sup>r</sup>.

In the name of God, Amen. The xxvij day of October in the year of our Lord God a thousand five hundred forty six I Roger Hadfield of the parish of Rushden in the diocese of Lincoln, clerk and vicar of the same, being sick in body and whole in mind, thanks be to God Almighty, make and ordain my last will and testament on this manner of form following And first I bequeath my soul to God Almighty and my body to be buried within the chancel of the church of our Blessed Lady, St. Mary of Rushden abovesaid.

Item, I bequeath to the church of Lincoln ijd. to the bells of Rushden xijd.

to the sepulchre light there xijd.

And I bequeath to Katherine Jordan my kinswoman my brown cow with the white face, all my household stuff and implements of household of whatsoever name it or they be, as bedding or hangings with other all my hogs and sheep, young and old, all my pullets.

Item, I bequeath to Elizabeth Jordan my kinswoman my  
flecked calf, and to Sir Richard ,my priest, my sanguine  
tawny gown lined with satin .  
To John Ireland of Clothall my brown bullock.  
And to Robert Parker a sheet.  
The residue of my goods not yet bequeathed and also my twenty  
angels being in the hands and keeping of John Ireland of  
Clothall abovenamed I give to Henry Parker my godson whom I  
ordain and make my faithful executor of this my last will  
and testament .To pay my debts ,bear my funeral charges and  
to bestow for the most profit for my soul and all Christian  
souls after his discretion as my assured trust is in him.  
To whom I give for his pains xiijs. iiijd. And I ordain  
M. John Newpath of Sandy,gentleman, the supervisor of this  
my will ,desiring him of his charity to see this my will  
performed according to whom I give for his pains vjs.viiijd.  
These being witnesses: William Goodman of Rushden, Sir Nich-  
olas Comford, parson of Cottered, Richard Blow of Wallington.  
Probate granted on 15 November, 1546.

# APPENDIX VII.

Details of the orders of those presented to livings between 1419 and 1547. The orders of a number of clergy were not given. There were no subdeacons or deacons recorded.

<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Priests</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Reference</u>
<u>Richard Fleming</u> 1419-1431	39	<u>Orders</u> 7	7	LAO Reg.XVI. fos.104r-117v
<u>Vacancy in see</u> 1424-1425	7	1	12	LPL I. fos.240r-263v
<u>William Gray</u> 1431-1436	38	3	5	LAO Reg.XVII. fos.75r-81v
<u>William Alnwick</u> 1437-1449	51	2	1	LAO Reg.XVIII. fos.164r-170v
<u>Marmaduke Lumley</u> 1450		2	1	LAO Reg.XVIII. fos.23r-v
<u>John Chedworth</u> 1452-1471	127	16	28	LAO Reg.XX. fos.298r-315v
<u>Thomas Rotherham</u> 1472-1480	71	3	6	LAO Reg.XXI. fos.110r-123r
<u>John Russell</u> 1480-1494	67	9	35	LAO Reg.XXII. fos.251r-263v
<u>Vacancy in see</u> 1494-1496	7		1	LAO Reg.XXIII. fos.11r-12v
<u>William Smith</u> 1495-1514	104	10	30	LAO Reg.XXIII. fos.352r-382v
<u>Thomas Wolsey</u> 1514			5	LAO Reg.XXV. fo. 6r
<u>William Atwater</u> 1514-1521	17	5	7	LAO Reg.XXV. fos.56r-59r
<u>John Longland</u> 1521-1547	49	54	37	LAO Reg.XXVII. fos.86r-95r

## APPENDIX VIII.

Pluralists in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon , a list compiled from the returns of 1366, from the article Pluralism in the Medieval Church; with notes on Pluralists in the diocese of Lincoln, 1366. by A.Hamilton Thompson, in Associated Architectural Societies' Reports , vol.XXXIV. 1917 - 18.- Vol. XXXVI 1922.

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1. Walter Aldeby: Scholar in the university of Cambridge. Rector of Holywell, Hunts. (20 marks) 1362. Prebendary of Bathwick in Wells (tax omitted) and of a prebend in the conventual church of Wherwell (12 marks). p.3 .
2. M. William Askeby: Chancellor of the exchequer. Archdeacon of Northampton. Vicar of Southoe, Hunts. in 1349. He also had the prebend of Bedford minor in Lincoln cathedral. He held Glatton, Hunts., but does not appear to have been instituted. He received a grant of the archdeaconry of Northampton from the Crown (C.P.R. 1361-4, 347). He also held Wainfleet, Lincs. (23 marks). pp. 7-8.
3. M. John Briene (Brian) , doctor of decrees. Rector of Hatfield, Herts. (55 marks) in 1349. Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin in 1350. He was prebendary of St. Mary's altar, Beverley in 1351. He had a long list of appointments. pp. 21-23
4. Robert Atte Brome: Rector of Stevenage, Herts. (40 marks) 1350. He was also prebendary of Benyngton in Wingham (20 marks) from 1353 (C.P.P. 51). He exchanged Stevenage for Deal, Kent in 1373. pp. 23-4.
5. Richard Bydyk : Clerk in chancery. Rector of All Saints, Brington, Hunts., (45 marks) 1366. He held an expectative grace of a benefice in the gift of the bishop or of the P. and C. of Durham, not exceeding 25 marks if with cure, 18 marks without cure. p. 26
6. M. John Carleton: the younger. Rector of Houghton, Hunts (52 marks). He exchanged Abingdon, 4 June, 1366 with the elder John Carleton for Houghton. He was also warden of St. Peter's altar in Lincoln cathedral (40 marks). p. 89.
7. John Haddon: Rector of Yaxley, Hunts. (53 marks) 1350. Preb. of Welton Beckhall in Lincoln (15 marks) from 1349. p. 206.

8. Robert Hynkele : Rector Baldock, Herts., with cure, not taxed, yearly value 30 marks. He has provision from Innocent VI, of expectative canonries of Auckland and St. Paul's. p. 208.
9. Philip Melreth: Rector of Westmill, Herts., 22 marks. Preb. of Marston St. Lawrence in Lincoln (18 marks), 1363. p. 217.
10. William Navesby: Prebendary of Caddington in St. Paul's, without cure, from 1362. Among other appointments he also held in 1366 was that of archdeacon of Chester in the diocese of Lichfield., with the prebendal church of Bolton, 20 marks. Preb. of Buckden in Lincoln, 60 marks. Preb. of Gates in Chichester, compatible, 12 marks. p. 220.
11. Thomas Neuby: Lived in London and had an office in Chancery. Rector Somersham, Hunts., 50 marks. (Inst. is not recorded) he probably exchanged with David Wollore. 1364. Preb. of Brampton in Lincoln, 53 marks. p. 224.
12. John Newenham: One of the chamberlains of the exchequer and one of the keeper of the king's jewels. Rector of Fenstanton, Hunts., incompatible, 45 marks. 1364-5. In 1363 he exchanged his prebend which he held in Chester for Leighton manor preb. in Lincoln (70 marks). He was also preb. of Stotfold in Lichfield (15 marks) and preb. of Bonehill in Tamworth, but resigned it. p. 225.
13. Michael Ravendale: Clerk in Chancery. Rector of Hemingford Abbots, Hunts., 25 marks, which he is bound to resign on obtaining another church. He was inst. to Hemingford Abbots on 19 Sept., 1351. pp. 232-3.
14. M. Roger Sutton Ll.D.: Rector of Glatton, Hunts., 31 marks, 10 shillings c. 1362-3 (date is uncertain). Canon of Hereford with expectation of a dignity or prebend. vol. xxxvi, p. 4.
15. John Swynlegh : Archdeacon of Huntingdon, not taxed, average yearly value 150 marks. Granted archdeaconry on 9 August, 1362. Prebendary of a preb. in St. John's Chester, not taxed, average yearly value 30 marks. vol. xxxvi, p. 5.
16. John Thorpe: King's clerk. Rector of Watton at Stone, Herts., 23 marks 1354. Preb. of Willesden in St. Paul's, 6 marks. He has a preb. in the chapel of the Blessed Mary and the Holy Angels, York, 10 marks. He was also canon of Salisbury with expectation of a prebend. vol. xxxvi, p. 8.
17. Thomas Walmesford: Rector of Kimbolton, Hunts. 1346 (34 m.) Preb. of the John of Caen, called Faucons, in St. Martin's-le-Grand, £11 14s. 9d. (No date given). vol. xxxvi, p. 17.

18. James Walsh: Rector of Great Staughton, Hunts. 40 marks.

His institution to Great Staughton is not recorded, but it is thought to have been about November, 1363. On 29 June, 1360 he was presented to the prebend of a third portion of Eccleshall in Lichfield, £22 4s. 5d. vol. xxxvi, 17.

19. Hugh Whitchurch: Rector of Great Munden, Herts., 31½ marks.

He was instituted in 1350. He was one of the original canons of St. George's, Windsor, in 1352. Yearly value 3 marks.

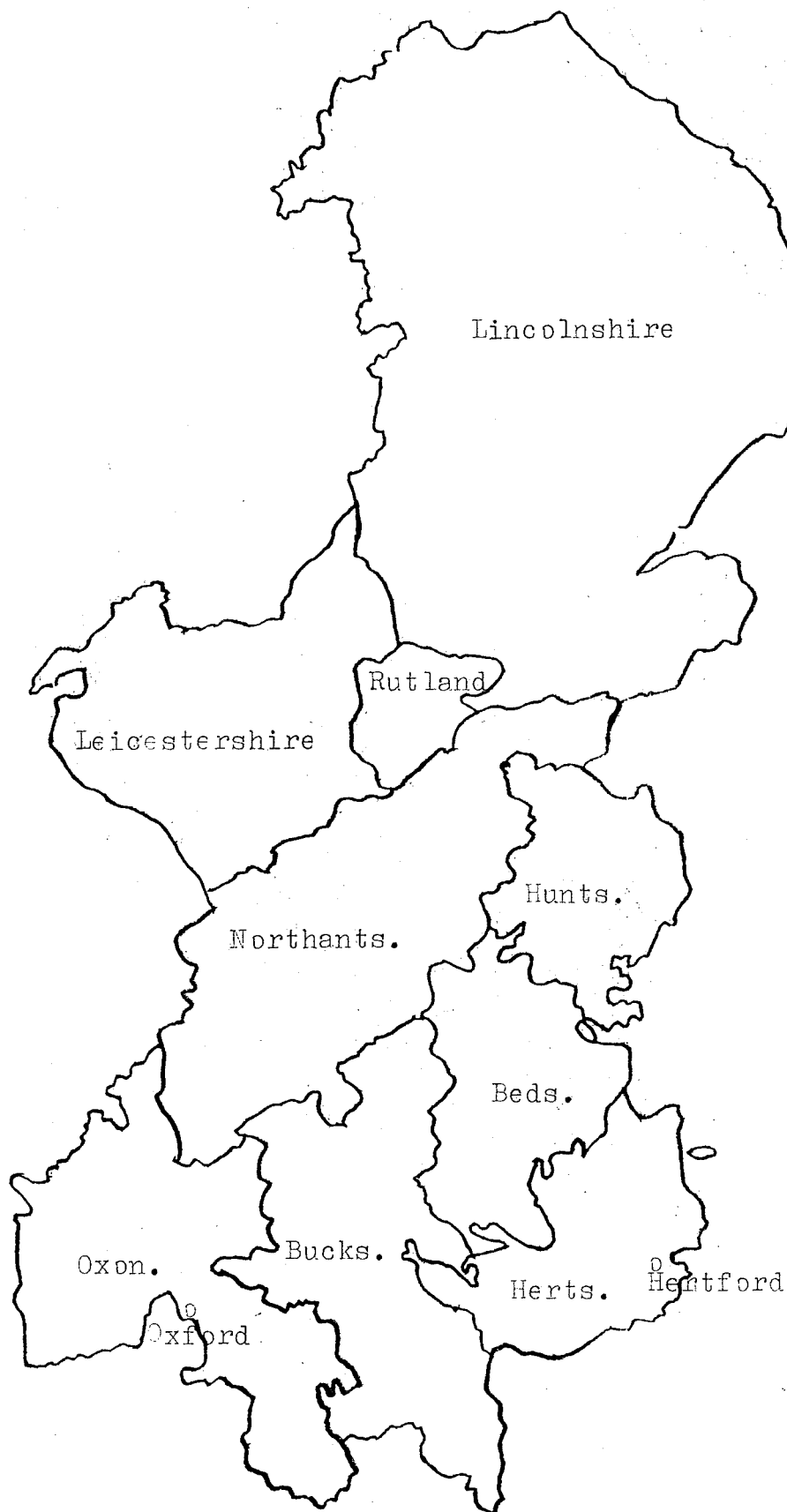
vol. xxxvi, 26.

20. David Wollore: Principal clerk of the king for 40 years.

Among his many benefices listed, he held in 1366 the church of Hornsea, York, 50 marks, the church of Brington, Hunts., by dispensation of the apostolic see, 45 marks and the preb. of Brampton, in Lincoln, 53 marks, 'the which, moved in this behalf by certain and lawful causes, he has effectually demised'. vol. xxxvi, p. 27.



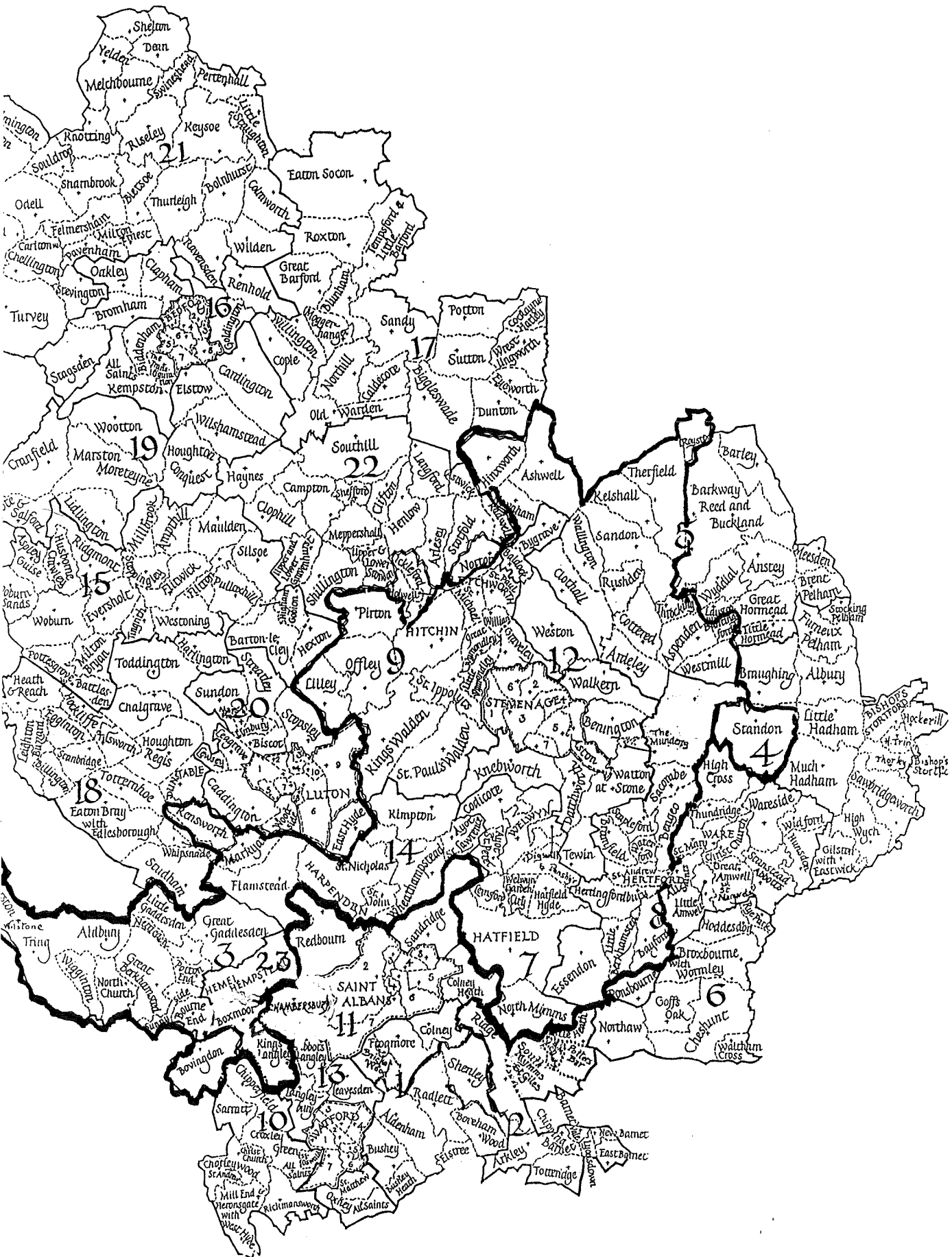
The Medieval Diocese of Lincoln

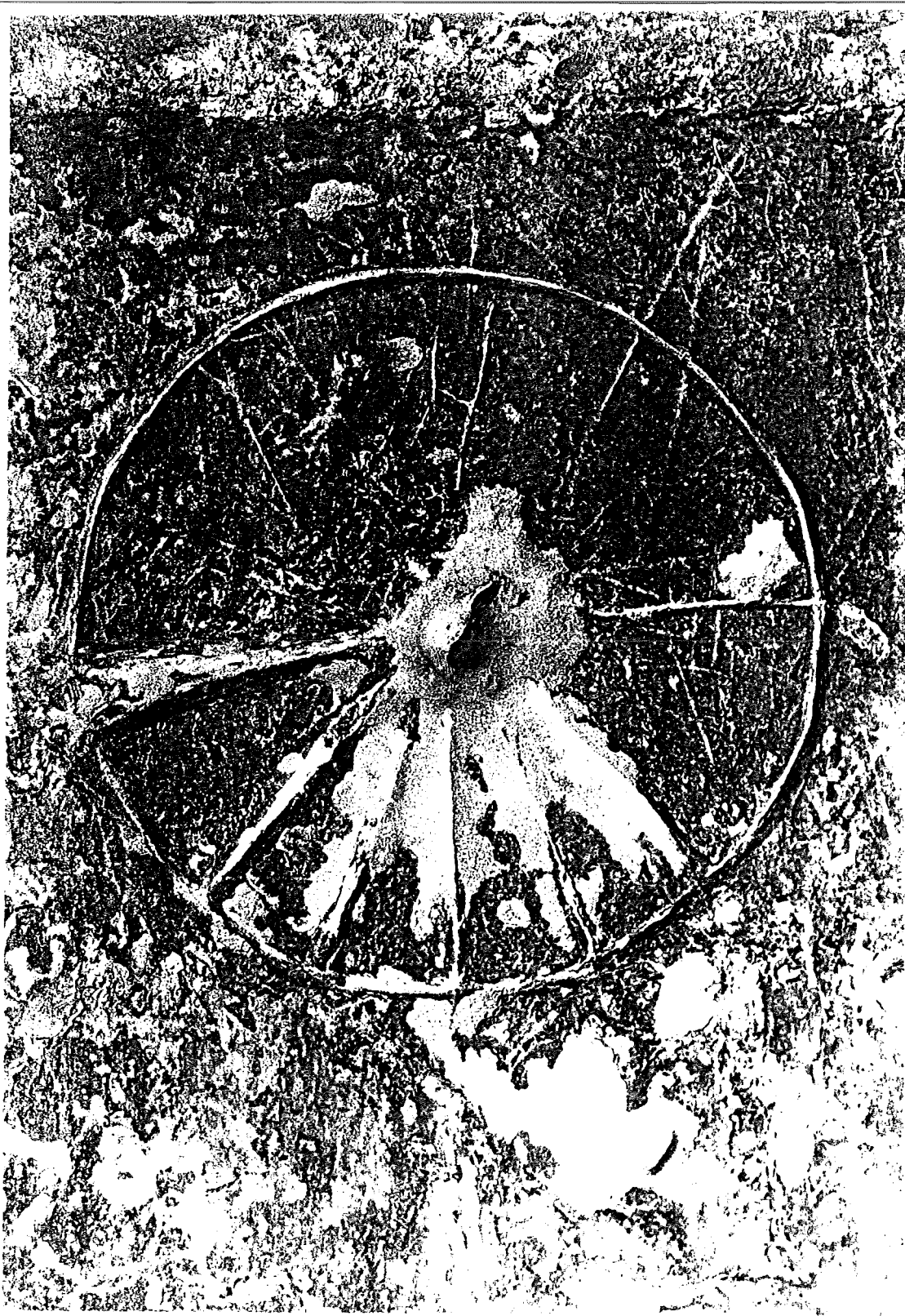


# HUNTINGDONSHIRE PARISHES



## Hertfordshire parishes within the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon





Scratch dial in the porch of St.Leonard's Church, Bengoe,  
Hertfordshire c.1120.